

**RICHMOND AND HILLCROFT ADULT AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**MINUTES**

of the meeting of the Board of  
Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College  
held at 5.30 pm on Thursday 2nd April 2020 via Microsoft Teams.

- Present: Ms Louise Fluker, Chair  
Ms Gabrielle Flint, Principal  
Prof. Andrew George  
Ms Jane O'Shea, Co-Vice Chair  
Prof. Linda Jones, Co-Vice Chair  
Ms Farah Rachlin  
Ms Lisa Sharpe  
Mr Graham Tharp  
Mr Nigel Ware  
Ms Helen Darracott  
Mr Richard Brewster  
Mr Mark Albrow
- In attendance: Ms Gaynor Bray, Vice Principal, Teaching & Learning (VP, T&L)  
Mr Neil Wallbank, Director of Finance & Resources and Clerk (DoF&R)  
Mr Henry Padden, Minute Taker

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2019**

*The Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019 as being an accurate record.*

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising that were not covered on the agenda.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Prof. Andrew George and Farah Rachlin declared their interest relating to Item 6 of the agenda. Prof. Linda Jones and Louise Fluker declared their interest relating to item 12B of the agenda.

**5. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

- a) Search & Governance Committee (26 February 2020)

Linda Jones reported that, concerning the Hillcroft centenary, she had not yet managed to meet with Jess Kidd. The closure of the Kingston History Centre due to COVID-19 meant that some actions remained outstanding.

*The Board noted the Minutes of the Search & Governance Committee.*

- b) Audit Committee (17 March 2020)

Richard Brewster observed that discussion around the risk relating to COVID-19 did not appear in the minutes although it had been debated and included in the risk register. The clerk will amend the minutes to reflect the discussion relating to COVID-19.

Farah Rachlin asked if any processes had changed to deal with the cheque fraud reported in the minutes. The DoF&R explained that manual cheques were now only being issued in emergency situations.

***The Board noted the Minutes of the Audit Committee.***

- c) Quality & Standards Committee (17 March 2020)

Louise Fluker temporarily disconnected from the meeting. Jane O'Shea assumed the chair.

***The Board noted the Minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee.***

- d) Finance & Resources Committee (11 March 2020)

[REDACTED]

Louise Fluker rejoined the meeting and resumed the chair.

***The Board noted the Minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee.***

- e) Capital Project Steering Group (25 February 2020)

***The Board noted the Minutes of the Capital Project Steering Group.***

**6. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

- a) Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Farah Rachlin and Prof. Andrew George declared an interest in this item and temporarily left the meeting.

Jane O'Shea outlined that she had chaired the interview panel that also comprised Prof. Linda Jones and the Principal. Harpreet Jossan, a representative from the AoC had been present as an external advisor.

The interview panel were unanimous in their decision to recommended to the Board that Prof. Andrew George be appointed as Chair of the Board and Farah Rachlin be appointed as Vice Chair.

**The Board approved the appointment of Prof. Andrew George as Chair of the Board and Farah Rachlin as Vice Chair, with the appointments taking effect from 1 August 2020. Prof. Andrew George and Farah Rachlin re-joined the meeting and were informed of their appointment for Chair and Vice Chair respectively.**

**7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

- a) Principal's Report – March 2020

The Principal reported that the outcome from the Ofsted inspection and RHACC's response the COVID-19 outbreak were two successes from the spring term. 64% of spring term provision had been put on line.. The GLA confirmed that there will be no year-end reconciliation or clawback of the AEB funding allocation. However, there could potentially be a shortfall of up to £1m of fee income and income from hire of facilities.

The Principal outlined that the College is looking into the Government Job Retention Scheme. The Principal noted that it may not be possible to access support from the scheme because the College receives Government grant funding.

[REDACTED]

Prof. Andrew George asked about arrangements for vulnerable learners and those with disabilities during closure of RHACC sites. The Principal explained that arrangements for

remote learning had been put in place which were agreed with parents/carers. Sponsoring authorities had been informed.

Mark Albrow asked about safeguarding responsibilities. The Principal stated that Safeguarding systems had been updated to take account of lockdown and a greater proportion of online delivery. The VP T&L added that the Safeguarding Working Group meetings were still being held and material on staying safe online was being prepared and distributed. The Net Alert system could no longer be used as it only covers activity on the College network.

***The Board noted the Principal's Report.***

## **8. AUDIT MATTERS**

- a) Risk Register and Action Plan 2019/20
  - Heat Map

There were no questions concerning the heat map.

- Risk Register and Action Plan

The DoF&R reported that the Audit Committee had discussed risk 4 (low demand from learners) and increased its risk level. Risk 13 (The College suffers an event that has an adverse impact on its reputation/operation) had also increased. Risk 14 (2019/20 budget not delivered as planned) had increased due to unknown impact on finances of Covid-19. Concerning risk 16, (funding on increased teachers pension costs) it had now been confirmed that the teachers' pensions increase would be funded for 2020/21. A new risk relating to Covid-19 has been added to the register.

Linda Jones asked how the quality of online provision would be evaluated. The Principal stated that the Quality and Standards team was working on a strategy to sample the quality of online provision.

The Principal reported that approx. £500,000 of fee income was at risk due to closure of summer school provision that could not be delivered online and the closure of the co-working area of The Bridge.

The Governing Body noted that online lessons could potentially mean the college had access to a much wider audience.

***The Board noted the Heat Map and Risk Register and Action Plan.***

## **9. FINANCE MATTERS**

- a) Coronavirus Update

The DoF&R reported that potential loss of fee income would be the greatest financial impact of Covid-19, the impact could be in the region of £500k. The College, however, has a strong cash balance, particularly in comparison to other colleges but this will require continued monitoring.

***The Board noted the Coronavirus Update.***

- b) January Management Accounts

***The Board noted the January 2020 Management Accounts***

- c) Integrated Financial Model for Colleges (IFMC)

The DoF&R reported that the new model IFMC has been introduced by the ESFA in the current year. The normal process will be for the IFMC to be submitted by the end of

January each year, and will need to include the following two years' budget. There have, however, been issues with errors in the model that was issued by the ESFA..

The current model is based on the financial plan that had been approved in July 2019, updated with actual financial results for 2018/19. There is a difference between the deficit reported in the July 2019 financial plan and that reported on the IFMC due to changes in the way in which figures are reported. A reconciliation between the two figures was provided. The model had been reviewed by the Finance Committee in its most recent meeting.

***The Board approved the Integrated Financial Model for Colleges.***

## **10. TEACHING & LEARNING MATTERS**

### a) Evaluation of Hillcroft Residential Provision

The Principal introduced the paper on the review of Hillcroft residential provision and noted that the paper was based on the initial information brought to the February 2020 strategy day. Management had taken account of feedback at the strategy day and the Quality and Standards Committee had subsequently explored the curriculum case for residential provision and its impact on learning outcomes. The Finance and Resources Committee had reviewed the financial aspects of residential provision.

Andrew George stated that the Quality and Standards Committee had scrutinised data on the outcomes of learners who studied on a residential and non-residential basis and had found that residential provision did not play a key role in learner progress.. The 24-hour provision was not meeting learner needs. Although some learners could benefit from residential provision, this could be provided in other ways e.g. through the use of local hotel accommodation. There was an opportunity to regain the national mission with online provision. It was considered important that the College retains its residential status in order to provide for those learners that will benefit from residential provision.

Farah Rachlin considered the paper comprehensive and added that learner feedback indicated that learners had a greater need of childcare provision than the residential provision.

Linda Jones stated that she did not agree with the comment from the DfE in a meeting with the residential colleges that the provision does not demonstrate good value for money.

Nigel Ware noted that, page 15 of paper 8(a)i, provided a summary of the financial consequences of ceasing residential provision. However, by increasing vocational provision on a non-residential basis this income could be recovered.

***The Board approved the cessation of residential provision at the Hillcroft site from September 2022 but decided that RHACC's Residential College status should be retained in order to make provision for those few students who might require this.***

### b) Teaching and Learning Quality Report

The VP T&L introduced the Teaching & Learning Quality report and noted that as Covid-19 had necessitated the closure of both sites so delivery patterns had significantly changed by the development of on-line learning. She stated that learners had generally responded positively to RHACC's measures to deal with Covid-19..

Farah Rachlin asked if a summer school would be held. Gaynor Bray confirmed this was being kept under review for a possible July start.

***The Board noted the Teaching and Learning Quality Report***

c) Learner Feedback and Involvement

Mark Albrow confirmed that the report had been reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee and that there were no significant issues to report. The Principal stated that 'Tell us what you think' sessions had not been held due to the current situation. She suggested holding a session for the online provision. VP T&L

***The Board noted the Learner Feedback and Involvement Report.***

11. **HILLCROFT CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT**

[REDACTED]

**The Board approved Robinson Low Francis as project manager.**

a) Formation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)

The Board considered the formation of a SPV for the Hillcroft development. Andrew George asked about the degree of independence the SPV Board would have from the RHACC Board. Nigel Ware explained that in a recent meeting the Stevens & Bolton VAT partner outlined that the SPV Board should not replicate the membership of the RHACC Board although it is acceptable to have members who sit on both Boards.

***The Board approved the formation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), a subsidiary company of the College, for the benefit of the Charity and protection of its assets generally in relation to the development of the Hillcroft campus.***

b) Update on Hillcroft Capital Development

[REDACTED]

***The Board noted the Update on the Hillcroft Capital Development***

12. **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

a) Appointment of New Governors

Louise Fluker reported that the Search & Governance Committee recommended that the Board appoint three new governors.

It was noted that Nasrin Farahani qualified as a student governor because she was currently enrolled on a Counselling course.

***The Board approved the appointment of David Izett and Kate Clarke as independent governors and Nasrin Farahani as a student governor.***

b) Succession planning

Louise Fluker presented the succession planning table and noted that governors have a four year term from October 2017 to October 2021 with eligibility for a further term depending on the total length of time served with the predecessor colleges. The Board discussed the current practice of having two vice-chairs and decided that from August 2020 the Board will revert to having just one vice-chair..

***The Board approved the change in structure to reduce the number of vice-chairs from two to one from August 2020.***

[REDACTED]

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) Ms Lisa Sharpe

Louise Fluker explained that Lisa Sharpe had expressed the desire to retire from the Board due to a change in her personal circumstances several months previously but had kindly agreed to stay on until new governors had been appointed. Now that three new governors have been appointed, Lisa Sharp will resign from the Board at the conclusion of the meeting. The Board thanked her for her contribution to the Board and RHACC

Lisa Sharpe thanked and praised the Board and Management team. She particularly thanked Nigel Ware as Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee and Louise Fluker as the Chair of the Board of Governors.

B0 Use of Hillcroft Site during Covid-19 lockdown

The Principal reported that Kingston Council is interested in using Hillcroft College facilities for critical workers and/or rough sleepers while the buildings are not in use. The Council would not be charged for the facility, but the cost of any damage would be reimbursed.

There was no other business

The meeting ended at 8.09 pm.