

RICHMOND & HILLCROFT ADULT & COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MINUTES

of the meeting of the Board of Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College held at 6.00pm
Thursday 27 September 2018 in PK9, Parkshot

Present: Ms Louise Fluker, Chair
Mr Mark Albrow, Lead Governor for Safeguarding/Prevent and Learner Involvement
Mr Richard Brewster, Audit Committee Chair
Ms Helen Darracott (via WebEx)
Ms Gabrielle Flint, Principal
Prof. Andrew George, Quality & Standards Committee Chair
Ms Jane O’Shea, Co-Vice Chair
Ms Farah Rachlin
Ms Lisa Sharp
Mr Graham Tharp
Mr Nigel Ware, Finance & Resources Committee Chair

In attendance: Mr Neil Wallbank, Director of Finance & Resources and Clerk
Ms Gaynor Bray, Vice Principal, Teaching & Learning
Ms Sara George, Minute Taker

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

1.	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Prof. Linda Jones, Co-Vice Chair apologised for her absence.</p> <p>The Chair informed the Board of the resignation of Ms Theresa Hoenig due to relocation and family commitments.</p>	
2.	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD</u> The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 18 July 2018 were approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>The Board asked Management to recommend to each meeting, via a note from the Clerk, which items should be redacted from minutes before publication.</p>	Clerk
3.	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING</u> Complaints Policy and Procedure The revised Complaints Policy and Complaints Procedure were circulated to the Board for approval by written resolution on 25 September 2018. As governors have commented upon the drafts, it was agreed that the proposed resolution of 25 September should be allowed to lapse, and the documents redrafted for a further written resolution at a later date.</p>	Clerk
4.	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES</u> Search & Governance Committee (12 September 2018)</p> <p><i>The Board noted the minutes of the Search & Governance Committee.</i></p>	
5.	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> None</p>	
6.	<p><u>PRINCIPAL’S REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2018</u> The Principal presented her report for September 2018, noting that good financial progress was being made.</p> <p>A governor expressed concern that the residential mission of Hillcroft may be put at risk by the demolition of Powell House and asked how long any disruption to residential learning was likely to last. The Principal replied that no decant plan had been finalised, however an investigation of bed nights over the last two years had indicated that only 20 rooms were ever in simultaneous use. The recent refurbishment of six rooms in the main</p>	

	<p>house has resulted in 24 bedrooms in that location, which should maintain the current rate of occupancy.</p> <p>Clarification regarding the Share My Workspace was requested. The Principal responded that the Share My Workspace website allowed organisations to offer their unused space for hire or find space to rent. Bookings are taken or rejected by the organisations owning the space. The College Events team already use similar sites to advertise RHACC space and the risk is considered low. The newly refurbished Annex spaces will be advertised on the site initially. It was noted that refurbishment of the Annex is due to be completed before Christmas 2018, with the site fully operational by the second week in January 2019.</p> <p>A governor asked when the results of the June 2018 staff survey will be made available to the Board. The Principal replied that the results will be taken initially to the Finance & Resources Committee when benchmarking info is available.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about the risk to the College's national mission caused by devolution, and in particular the GLA's assertion that they will only fund learners living in London and provision that aligns with Mayoral priorities. Funding for learners from other Mayoral regions will need to be negotiated directly with them, with funding for learners from non-devolved areas continuing to be provided by the ESFA. The Principal highlighted that in 2017-18, only five RHACC learners came from outside the London area. Lottery Project funds could be used for national IAG work for women. The Principal noted that following a recent meeting with the GLA it is evident that the detail with regards to how the GLA will manage AEB funds is yet to be fully determined.</p> <p>A governor asked whether data could be provided on the number of new learners to the College, particularly as a way of judging how successfully the marketing and learner engagement strategies were operating. The Principal replied that this work is currently being undertaken.</p> <p>In answer to a question about the reduction in the number of BME learners, the Principal responded that this has been caused by the cessation of the subcontracting arrangement with E Training Ltd. The areas of care and social care, the focus of E Training Ltd provision, tend to have a higher proportion of BME learners enrolled. It was noted that the College has a higher percentage of BME learners than within the resident population of the local boroughs, and that achievement rates were generally on a par with non-BME students.</p> <p>It was noted that only 25% of learners are male (although this percentage rises to 50% for LLDD provision). The Principal indicated that this percentage is standard for adult education. Campaigns targeting male learners have had differing levels of success; some courses have a higher proportion of men enrolled. It was agreed that male learning needs and demographics should be discussed further by the Quality & Standards Committee.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Principal's Report for September 2018.</i></p>	Principal
7.	<p><u>FINANCIAL & RESOURCES MATTERS</u> Management Accounts – July 2018</p> <p>The Director of Finance & Resources presented the Management Accounts for July 2018, informing the Board that they would form the basis of the external audit, the work for which commences in October. The Accounts show an estimated overall surplus for the year of £434k, however RACC reported a deficit of £438k for the period ending 30 September 2017, which combined with the surplus of the merged college would result in a £4k deficit against the original budget of £166k surplus. The end of year position shows an adverse variance to that forecast previously, mainly resulting from additional staff restructuring costs and the extension of the destinations survey to include all learners which added an additional £20k to the outturn. The ESFA financial score remains at 'outstanding'.</p> <p>It was noted that the Management Accounts are based on the College achieving 100% of the ESFA funding allocation. The ESFA rules for 2018/19 state that they will pay for 103% of achievement. Rules for previous years have not stated that over achievement will be paid which is why only 100% has been included within the accounts at the present time.</p>	

	<p>The Director of Finance & Resources reported that RHACC was randomly selected for an ESFA funding audit, which took place in early September. The auditors queried some additional learning support claims and have asked for further evidence to be supplied. A further audit sample may be required. Outstanding issues will need to be resolved before the final ILR for 2017/18 is submitted in October 2018. If further sampling is required, resulting in a delay to the ESFA reconciliation statement, this may delay the final sign-off of the external audit. The Board asked that they be informed of the result of the audit by email.</p> <p>The £2 million overpayment from the ESFA was discussed. The Principal noted that the College has had a number of issues with the merger of the two ESFA contracts that has impacted on funding and clawback. It is the College's intention to return the net overpayment when requested.</p> <p>The Director of Finance & Resources informed the Board that it is rumoured that the Teacher's Pension Scheme contribution rate will increase from 16.8% to 23.5% from September 2019. The Department of Education has indicated that help will be available for schools and academies to cover the additional costs, and have stated that they will 'look at the situation' for colleges that may require assistance. The potential cost to RHACC could be in the region of £120k - £130k p.a.</p> <p>A governor asked why expenditure for full time teaching staff had decreased and the costs for part time teaching staff had increased. The Principal indicated that the College are trying to recruit more established staff as this has a beneficial effect on teaching quality.</p> <p>In answer to a question about retention of funds after the capital build on the Parkshot site, the Director of Finance reported that Bouygues UK had recently requested payment. Although work has been undertaken to rectify issues with the hearing loop system, the College has stated that user testing with groups of hard of hearing learners will need to take place before payment is made.</p> <p>The decrease in take up of advanced learner loans was discussed. The Director of Finance & Resources assured the Board that this was being closely monitored, but as applications can take a while to process, it was too early in the academic year to gain a picture of the 2018-19 loan uptake. The Principal noted that take up is low nationwide as older adults are reluctant to take on a debt. Further work to promote the benefits of advanced learner loans will be undertaken.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Management Accounts for July 2018</i></p>	Principal
8.	<p><u>TEACHING & LEARNING MATTERS</u> Teaching and Learning Quality Report</p> <p>The Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning presented the Teaching and Learning Quality Report for September 2018, highlighting in particular the 9% improvement to Hillcroft achievement rates. Although achievement rates are still slightly below national averages, it is a large increase taking into account the merger.</p> <p>A governor asked why a reduction in enrolments onto Hillcroft 2020 Lottery workshops will result in an increase in enrolments to normal provision. The Principal indicated that the lottery workshops do not form part of the ILR, and that some learners were enrolling on H2020 courses as opposed to RHACC provision. In answer to a question regarding the national remit of the Lottery project and the impact that devolution may have on the final years of H2020, the Vice Principal reported that the first two years of the project focussed on work within the South East. The original bid focused on local and regional work, although with some national reach. Two regional road shows are planned for year 3 of H2020, and one strand will link up with other national projects. The Lottery Project Officer has approved the plans for year 3, which have been refocused back to the original objectives.</p> <p>The Board asked that the January Strategy Day include a focus on the College's national mission in relation to funding issues.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Teaching and Learning Quality Report.</i></p>	Clerk

<p>9.</p>	<p>ESTATES MATTERS</p> <p>Annex redevelopment The Director of Finance & Resources reported that after a tender process (which included 3 contractor interviews) Noble House Services had been appointed to refurbish the Annex. The first onsite meeting will take place on 3 October, with work scheduled to complete prior to Christmas. Full occupation and the opening will take place in early January 2019.</p> <p>The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee confirmed that the tender process had complied with the College's financial regulations and that the Committee had approved Noble House's appointment.</p> <p>Hillcroft redevelopment The Director of Finance & Resources reported that he and the Principal had attended the launch of the GLA's Development Support Fund prospectus in early September. The deadline for the expression of interest is 12 noon on Monday 1 October.</p> <p>Two meetings have been held with Council planners and the design team, and feedback has been very positive. The Council has recommended that when planning permission is sought, it should be for the whole site. Officials expressed pleasure that the house will be returned to residential usage. The pre-planning report will be submitted with the expression of interest.</p> <p>The Development Support Fund offers a match funding ratio of 2:1 (2 x bidder, 1 x GLA). It has therefore been decided that the expression of interest will be for £8 million: £4 million from the sale of the site, £2.7 million from the GLA leaving a funding gap of £1.5 million. This is because the GLA have indicated that they may provide additional support above the stated 2:1 ratio. If the full £2.7 million is made available, the College could choose to build a reduced number of blocks as opposed to the 5 planned.</p> <p>A governor asked whether the bid would be prejudiced if the project seemed undeliverable. The Principal replied that more detailed plans would be discussed with the GLA at the next stage of the bid process; the bid, the deadline for which is January, will involve a presentation to the GLA design team. It was noted that there were not many other organisations at the prospectus launch, and that the match funding terms are not particularly generous. It was therefore hoped that the GLA would consider awarding RHACC part of the £75 million available. The outcome of the bids will be made known in April 2019.</p> <p>In answer to questions regarding a 'plan B' the Director of Finance & Resources indicated that building fewer blocks would be the fall-back position. Funds have been put aside in the capital projects budget to progress with planning reports so that should RHACC be successful full planning consent can be sought in April. It was agreed that planning reports should be progressed using the funds in the capital budget once the outcome from the Expression of Interest is known.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the verbal updates on estates matters.</i></p>	<p>Dir. of Fin & Res.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE Search & Governance Committee Annual Report 2017 2018</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Search & Governance Committee Annual Report for 2017 2018</i></p> <p>Clerk's Report 2017 2018 The Clerk presented his report for 2017 - 18, which noted no whistleblowing disclosures, eleven freedom of information requests and the governor attendance figures. A governor questioned whether the College was obliged to publish answers to Freedom of Information requests on the RHACC website, as universities are required to. The Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee volunteered to check the requirements.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Clerk's Report for 2017 2018</i></p> <p>Board self-assessment results 2017 2018 The Clerk presented the Board self-assessment results for 2017 - 18, which incorporated comments made during one to one meetings between governors and the Chair. Governors</p>	<p>Q & S Chair</p>

	<p>agreed that the self-assessment process had been useful as a way of reflecting on their role and the work of the year.</p> <p>The key theme of increasing the time the Board spends on curriculum matters was discussed. It was suggested that the Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee talk through Quality & Standards Committee minutes at the beginning of Board meetings to promote discussion, and that half day learning walks that enable governors to visit a variety of college provision be arranged. A protocol for class visits that allows governors to comment on what they are seeing but not assess teacher performance is required, as well as a briefing and de-briefing session. It was noted that due to the amount of Ofsted preparation that is being carried out at present, careful scheduling of visits will be required. The Clerk was tasked with obtaining governor availability.</p> <p>It was noted that Ofsted could inspect the College at any time, with inspectors needing to see evidence that governors understand the College's strengths and areas for development. It was agreed that as part of inspection preparations, mock governor interviews will take place, and that this information should be passed to staff.</p> <p>A governor training plan will be created using the results of the self-assessment report, along with an amended Board and Committee work plan. Actions will initially be owned by the relevant Committees.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the results of the self-assessment process 2017 2018.</i></p> <p>Capital Project Steering Group The Principal presented the draft terms of reference for the Capital Project Steering Group, which had been approved by the Group's Chair, Mr Nigel Ware. It was suggested that a benefit realisation package should be created early in the work of the Group. It was agreed that the levels of delegation and thresholds need to be more clearly defined, for example, "approval of variations to the project budget" should state a percentage that would be acceptable prior to requiring referral back to the Board. Although the Group will work within the College's financial regulations, it was agreed that a formal Board resolution setting specific limits is required. Powers, such as the appointment of contractors, should also be defined. It was also agreed that a Gantt chart detailing decision points and who is responsible for those decisions would be useful.</p> <p>It was clarified that the quorum for meetings of the Group will be 3 governors. It was agreed that the role of the Executive team should be included within the terms of reference of the Group.</p> <p>It was noted that during the life of the capital development project, the Capital Project Steering Group will require different authorities, skills and meeting schedules at different times, and therefore the terms of reference will be regularly reviewed and updated. It was agreed that the CV of potential co-opted member Matthew Pope should be circulated to all governors.</p> <p><i>The Board approved the terms of reference for the Capital Project Steering Group, subject to the amendments above.</i></p>	<p>VP Teaching & Learning</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>VP Teaching & Learning</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
11	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u> Governor recruitment</p> <p>It was noted that with the resignation of Ms Hoenig there are two independent governor vacancies on the Board, as well as a vacancy for a student governor. It was agreed that Ms Farah Rachlin will move to serve on the Quality & Standards Committee, serving on both this Committee and Audit until further governors are recruited.</p> <p>It was agreed that Ms Sarah Inigo-Jones, a previous student governor, will be made aware of the current vacancies. It was also agreed that newspaper adverts will be posted, with governors forwarding the details of the vacancies to any groups to which they are connected. T.</p> <p>It was agreed that an article describing the rewards of being a governor should be created, detailing how the College is transforming lives and using pictures from the recent Learner Awards. This can be used as PR, on LinkedIn and on social media. It was also suggested</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

	that a slide could be incorporated into the beginning of presentations made by the Richmond Society.	
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The meeting closed at 8.30pm