

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 Tuesday, 19 October 2021 onsite Parkshot and via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Prof. Andrew George, Chair
Mr Mark Albrow
Mr Richard Brewster (remote)
Ms Kate Clarke
Ms Helen Darracott
Ms Gabrielle Flint, Principal
Mr David Izett
Mr Nick Jones
Ms Jane O'Shea
Ms Farah Rachlin, Vice Chair
Ms Sharon Raj
Mr Graham Tharp, Staff Governor
Mr Nigel Ware

In attendance: Ms Gaynor Bray, Vice Principal, Teaching & Learning (VP, T&L)
Mr Neil Wallbank, Director of Finance & Resources and Clerk (DoF&R)
Ms Grit King, Corporate Support Assistant

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the Board meeting.</p> <p><u>PRESENTATION BY GAYNOR BRAY, VICE PRINCIPAL TEACHING AND LEARNING</u></p> <p>Gaynor Bray gave a presentation to the Board on safeguarding duties at RHACC. She outlined the responsibilities that governors and staff have regarding safeguarding and reminded governors of the recently circulated safeguarding policy and procedures document. She outlined the use of the NetSupport system that is triggered by the use of certain words or terminology in emails and web searches and how these are monitored on a daily basis.</p> <p>The Vice Principal further described the safeguarding training all staff receive, as part of their induction and update training for existing staff. Furthermore, all safeguarding officers, duty managers and crèche staff undertake additional external safeguarding training.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Gaynor Bray for this insightful presentation.</p>	
1.	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>Dave Munby and Paul Simmons sent their apologies.</p>	
2.	<p><u>MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15 July 2021</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 15 July 2021 were agreed to be an accurate record and approved without any redactions.</p>	
3.	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <p>Matters arising concerned the strategy and budget, which are addressed under 5a and 6a.</p> <p>The Chair reminded Board members that there will be an additional Board meeting on 25th November to enable the financial statement auditors to present their Post Audit Report to the Board. This is now a requirement of the revised Post 16 Audit Code of Practice.</p>	

	In response to a query from Farah Rachlin it was noted that the revised risk register will be presented to the December Board meeting.	Clerk
4.	<p>a) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>The Board noted the proposed Register of Interest to be published on the College website following the submission of the annual returns. The Chair requested that Board members inform the Clerk of any in-year changes.</p>	Clerk
5.	<p>a) PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</p> <p>The Board received the Principal's report. The Principal Updated the Board regarding recent communication with the FE Commissioner and the proposal to engage the College in a diagnostic assessment because f it was a residential college. This approach was challenged and the proposed intervention was withdrawn.</p> <p>The new annual 'review' meeting for colleges with the ESFA and FE Commissioner will take place in February 2022.</p> <p>The Principal updated the Board on the Skills Bill and the risks to wellbeing related learning posed by a funding methodology based on job outcomes. The Principal will raise these concerns with Ed Davey (Lib Dem MP for Kingston and Surbiton).</p> <p>The Board noted the continuing approach to ensuring that the College is Covid safe.</p> <p>The Principal outlined the current enrolment and funding position and assured the Board that work is being undertaken to increase learner numbers, this includes planning for additional January provision. The college is also taking part in the mayoral hub funding, networking within partnerships, South London NHS trust and Morley College to develop the vocational strength of RHACC.</p> <p>Nick Jones asked how the college is trying to control costs in the future. The Principal responded that management are reviewing the staffing structure.</p> <p>Kate Clarke asked about the retention of learners and how learners are feeling about being back on-site. The Vice Principal stated that learners had generally fed back that they were happy to be back on site. Learners say they feel safe in the well-spaced and ventilated classes. However, if enrolments increase it will be difficult to ensure the same personal space for learners in all classes.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Principal's report for October 2021.</i></p>	Principal
6.	<p>a) DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN</p> <p>The Board received an update on the draft strategic plan from the Principal. Following the May Board strategy session, the feedback from governors was further developed and shared with staff. The 3 main aims are: growth, improvements to standards and financial sustainability. To achieve these aims, five areas of development have been identified: people/staff development, curriculum development, use of technology, development of the estate and partnerships.</p> <p>David Izett asked if there had been any negative staff feedback. The Principal explained that some staff noted concerns around the value of being or doing things 'differently' . Therefore this has been replaced with the value of being 'enterprising' with an explanation of how this involves being prepared to find different ways to e.g. problem solve..</p> <p>Jane O'Shea commented on the introduction on page 2 feeling that the word education should be mentioned earlier in the paragraph and that on page 9 a cog is missing for Women's Education. The Principal explained that the diagram will be replaced and Women's Education included.</p> <p>It was agreed that detailed figures regarding finance and growth etc should not be included in the document as this can often lead to a focus on detail rather than the strategic nature of the plan. As an example there was discussion around a learner number target of 10,000</p>	Principal

	<p>and if was realistic or an aspiration, it might be more appropriate to include a % growth figure rather than an absolute number.</p> <p>Sharon Raj noted that some points in 'Vision' were vague whilst others were very definite, and so perhaps needed a further review.</p> <p>The Chair summarised that a further revision of the document will be an agenda item at the December Board meeting and that the relevant committees will be able to review the underpinning strategies in the spring term.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the draft strategic plan and that a revised version will be presented to the December meeting of the Board.</i></p>	Clerk
7.	<p><u>CURRICULUM MATTERS</u></p> <p>a) Emerging SAR findings</p> <p>The Board received the emerging SAR presented by the Vice Principal and noted that scrutiny of the detail will be undertaken by the Quality and Standards Committee in November. The areas of development are reflective of the strategic plan, which are technology, partnerships and curriculum.</p> <p>Mark Albrow questioned whether the grades for Arts and Community Learning indicated fundamental leadership issues. The Vice Principal responded that there have been improvements but there is still more that can be achieved. More training is needed and is being planned for and a restructuring of the departments is being considered in order to strengthen lines of management.</p> <p>It was noted that a number of learners chose not take exams at the end of last academic year due to the disruption to their learning as a result of Covid.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Emerging SAR findings.</i></p>	
8.	<p><u>FINANCE AND RESOURCES MATTERS</u></p> <p>a) Management Accounts</p> <p>The Board received the management accounts for the year to July 2021 and it was noted these would be the indicative full year results pending pension and any potential audit adjustments. It was noted that 2020/21 had been another difficult year, mainly as a result of lost fee income due to Covid. The outturn position moves the College's financial health from 'Good' to 'Requires Improvement'.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Management Accounts for July 2021</i></p> <p>b) ESFA Overpayment</p> <p>The Board received a paper regarding the request from the ESFA for repayment of the overpayment it made to the College in 2018. It was agreed that the extended repayment terms, outlined in the paper, should be negotiated if possible.</p> <p><i>The Board approved management to negotiate extended repayment terms with the ESFA.</i></p>	
9.	<p><u>HILLCROFT CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT</u></p> <p>a) Update Report</p> <p>The Board received the update report by the DoF&R on the Hillcroft capital development outlining the current key issues impacting on the future development of the scheme. These relate to VAT, ongoing planning permission and an application for FE Capital transformation funding.</p> <p>The DoF&R explained that the key decision point for the Board will be in Spring 2022, at which time there should be greater clarity around the issues which will allow the Board to make a decision to either approve the go-ahead of the scheme or consider alternative options. CPSG will consider the issues outlined in the report at its meeting on 3 November. Submission of the planning application is anticipated to be late November/early December.</p>	

	<i>The Board noted the Hillcroft capital development update report.</i>	
10.	<p><u>CLERK'S UPDATE</u></p> <p>a) Update report The Board received the update report from the Clerk explaining that the college has now subscribed to a governance software package called GVO, which will become the main portal for all governance related matters. The package will be accessed via a web page and is aimed specifically at colleges and schools. GVO will offer a number of training sessions before the next Board meeting to allow everyone to attend. These dates will be communicated shortly. <i>The Board noted the Clerk's update report.</i></p> <p>b) Governance Development Programme The Clerk informed the Board that the college has signed up to the Education Training Foundation governor training resources, which is self-directed and can be tailored to specific needs following the completion of a short questionnaire by individual governors. Any training undertaken should be notified to the Clerk to enable training records to be updated. Details of how to access the resources, including the access code, were explained in the accompanying paper. <i>The Board noted the Governance development programme update.</i></p>	Clerk
11.	<p><u>SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATIONS</u></p> <p>a) Search and Governance annual report 2020/21 <i>The Board noted the Search and Governance Committee Annual Report 2020/21.</i></p> <p>b) Committee Self-Assessment Results The Board received the Committee self-assessment results from the Clerk. The Chair questioned what could move the Board from good to outstanding. The Clerk suggested further development and involvement with external partnerships and continue to build on the fundamentals of good governance. The Principal added that at an inspection, Ofsted would look for evidence that the Board provides sufficient challenge to management. The Board approved the Committee self-assessment results.</p> <p>c) Whistleblowing and Freedom of Information report 2020/ 2021 <i>The Board noted whistleblowing and freedom of information report 2020/21.</i></p>	
12.	<p><u>MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEES</u></p> <p>a) Capital Project Steering Group – 11 August 2021 <i>The Board noted the minutes of the Capital Project Steering Group.</i></p> <p>b) Search and Governance Committee – 22 September 2021 <i>The Board noted the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee.</i></p>	
13.	<p><u>RETIRING MEMBERS</u> On behalf of the Board, the Principal and Chairman thanked Mark Albrow and Helen Darracott for their outstanding work and contributions as Board and committee members and wished them good luck in their futures.</p>	
14.	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u> There was no other business.</p>	

The meeting ended at approximately 7.40 pm.