

RICHMOND AND HILLCROFT ADULT AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MINUTES

of the meeting of the Board of
Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College
held at 6.00 pm on Thursday 25 March 2021 onsite Parkshot and via Microsoft Teams.

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

In attendance: Ms Gaynor Bray, Vice Principal, Teaching & Learning (VP, T&L) (onsite)
Mr Neil Wallbank, Director of Finance & Resources and Clerk (DoF&R) (Remote)
Ms Porlyin Rhoden, Director of Richmond Business School, for pre-meeting presentation only.

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

<p>The Chair welcomed the 3 new governors to their first meeting of the Board and introductions were made.</p> <p><u>PRESENTATION BY PORLYIN RHODEN, DIRECTOR OF RICHMOND BUSINESS SCHOOL</u></p> <p>Porlyin Rhoden, gave a presentation outlining the purpose and structure of the Richmond Business School and a variety of learner and enrolment data.</p> <p>The 9 programme areas covered by the school were outlined together with the range of the different types of fee income. A high level breakdown of the quality data relating to the schools also presented. It was highlighted how the Business School supports other areas of the college e.g. IT for ESOL and business admin for ESOL etc.</p> <p>The presentation outlined the School's employer engagement activity and the fact that the school does not cover apprenticeships and traineeships, as they are mainly aimed at the 16 to 18 year old age group. Bespoke programmes are provided for employers and a number of learners are sponsored by employers in undertaking their studies.</p> <p>It that there were three potential areas of concern within the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Counselling;• Accounting; and• access to business <p>The actions to address the concerns and these curriculum areas were also noted.</p> <p>The Director of School outlined development work being undertaken relating to:</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce development/ teacher training • SEND staff upskilling • Digital entitlement • Employer offers <p>In response to a query regarding RBS position post Covid-19, it was outlined that there is likely to be more of a demand for blended learning and also training for SME's in the use of technology.</p> <p>Mark Albrow enquired how marketing for the School was undertaken. It was explained that the School needs to market the business offer in a different way from the rest of the College, more use needs to be made of electronic marketing, particularly LinkedIn.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Director of the Richmond Business School for her comprehensive and informative presentation.</p>	
1.	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> There were no apologies for absence.</p>	
2.	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2020</u> <i>The minutes of the Board meeting held on 15 December 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record and approved with redaction</i></p>	Clerk
3.	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING</u> There were no actions arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	
4.	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
5.	<p><u>a) PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</u> The Board received the Principal's report.</p> <p>The Principal outlined the current claw back position with the GLA where the threshold has been set at 90%. She explained that the AoC is lobbying hard on behalf of the sector in order to reduce the level of the threshold. The Director of Finance and Resources explained the arrangements that will be in place to recover any funds by the GLA and/or the ESFA.</p> <p>[REDACTION]</p> <p>The Principal provided an update on the current position on resolving outstanding issues with the LBRuT contract and that negotiations are moving in the right direction.</p> <p>Feedback was received on the current situation regarding the 'return to College' following the latest lockdown. There has been a positive response from both staff and learners and arrangements for testing are in place. No positive tests have been recorded from those undertaken in College. The Principle informed the Board that one long serving member of staff has died as a result of Covid.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Principal's report for March 2021.</i></p> <p><u>b) SKILLS FOR JOBS WHITE PAPER</u> The Board received a paper outlining the Skills for Jobs White Paper. There was discussion around the impact that this would have on RHACC and its employer engagement activities. The Principal noted that there is a need to match the requirements of learners, employers and government strategy. Its intention to make the curriculum offer available for people who are retraining as well as those who require basic skills to enable them to undertake further training.</p>	

	<p>The Chair enquired as to how we are using the facilities at the Bridge for people that are not subscribed to the Bridge membership. The Principle responded that we are holding events for both members and non-members on topics such as business support, access to grants etc.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the report on the Skills for Jobs White Paper.</i></p>	
6.	<p><u>FINANCIAL & RESOURCES MATTERS</u></p> <p>a) January 2021 Management Accounts</p> <p>The Board received the management accounts for the 6 months to January 2021 which show a positive variance against the revised budget of £170k, primarily due to reduced pay and non-Pay expenditure. From a cash flow perspective, the College remains in a reasonably strong position with a balance of around £4.2m at the end of January. The DoF&R highlighted that these accounts assume that the College will not incur any claw back of funding in 2020/21 as a result of not meeting the GLA funding allocation target, however, both the GLA and the ESFA have yet to make an announcement on the process for 2020/21. It was further noted that the on-going lockdown is likely to negatively impact on the financial performance of College in the current year. In response to a query, it was noted that the College has a number of staff on furlough and the situation continues to be monitored.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the management accounts for January 2021.</i></p> <p>b) Update on Hillcroft Capital Development</p> <p>The Board received and noted the update on the Hillcroft capital project. This included an update on the Implications of a recent VAT ruling by the Upper Tribunal which potentially has the impact that the scheme will be subject to VAT. The budget has been based on the scheme not being subject to VAT in line with current HMRC policy for the sector. If there is VAT to be charged on the scheme this will potentially add in excess of £1.2 million to the cost of the scheme. The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee outlined to the Board that HMRC is surprised by the ruling. The implications will be far reaching across the education sector as a whole and not just the FE sector. It was noted that the financial viability of the scheme will need to be reconsidered if the scheme becomes liable for VAT.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the update on the Hillcroft capital project.</i></p>	
7.	<p><u>AUDIT MATTERS</u></p> <p>Risk Register and Action Plan</p> <p>The Board received the Risk Register and Action Plan recommended by the Audit Committee and noted the changes to the register. It was also noted that the red rated risks have a link to the impact of Covid on the College. The Chair of the Audit Committee provided positive feedback to the Board on his recent attendance at management’s risk management meeting and that it provided him with an insight into the work that is undertaken to develop and monitor the risk register.</p> <p><i>The Board approved the Risk Register and Action Plan</i></p>	
8.	<p><u>TEACHING & LEARNING MATTERS</u></p> <p>a) Teaching and Learning Quality Report</p> <p>The Board received the Teaching & Learning Quality Report. The VPT&L outlined to the Board the main points in the report and that work was now being undertaken in planning for the 2021/22 academic year as well as some re-planning for the current academic year as a result of the pandemic. Farah Rachlin, the Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee, outlined that the report had been reviewed by that Committee.</p>	

	<p>b) Equality and Diversity Action Plan</p> <p>The Board received the Equality and Diversity action plan. The VPT&L Informed the board that both the Single Equality Scheme and the Action plan are due for review for the next academic year, and the drafts will be taken to the Quality and Standards Committee for scrutiny, and then to the Board for approval.</p> <p>In response to a query from Nigel Ware it was noted that the action plan is not subject to an external review although it is something that Ofsted may request to see. Sharon Raj enquired about the problems identified in the action plan regarding the website and it was explained that these are issues mainly around the navigation of the site which are being investigated further.</p> <p>The Principal Outlined that a survey is being planned on the effects of remote working and staff wellbeing. She also outlined that various activities have been undertaken with staff and there is also a dedicated Covid mailbox for staff to raise any issues that they may have . She reminded the Board that a workload survey had been undertaken two years ago. Graham Tharpe commented that there have been clear messages from management about the availability of various support systems to help staff if required.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <p>a) approved the Self-Assessment Report 2019/20;</p> <p>b) approved the Quality Improvement Plan 2020/21</p>	
9.	<p><u>SEARCH & GOVERNANCE MATTERS</u></p> <p>a) Appointment of new governors to committees</p> <p>The Chair gave a verbal update on the appointment of the three new members to committees for the remainder of the year and proposed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nick Jones – Audit Committee; • Dave Munby – Audit Committee; • Paul Simmons – Finance & Resources Committee <p>The Board approved the appointments</p> <p>b) Policy for Addressing Complaints Against the Board</p> <p>The Clerk outlined a new policy for addressing complaints against the Board which had been reviewed by the Search & Governance Committee and recommended for approval.</p> <p>The Board approved the Policy for Addressing Complaints Against the Board</p> <p>c) Future administrative arrangements</p> <p>The Clerk informed the Board of the appointment of Grit King as Corporate Support Assistant and that she will be providing admin support on all governance matters and should be the point of contact for matters of a routine nature.</p>	
10.	<p><u>MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEES</u></p> <p>a) FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE (11 MARCH 2021) The Board noted the Finance & Resources Committee minutes of 11 March 2021</p> <p>b) QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE (10 MARCH 2021) The Board noted the Quality & Standards Committee minutes of 10 March 2021</p> <p>c) SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (2 FEBRUARY 2021) The Board noted the Search & Governance Committee minutes of 2 February 2021</p> <p>d) WOMEN’S EDUCATION STEERING GROUP (16 MARCH 2021) The Board noted the Women’s Education Steering Group minutes of 16 March 2021</p> <p>e) AUDIT COMMITTEE (18 March 2021) The Board noted the Audit Committee minutes of 18 March 2021</p>	

11.	<p>ITEMS TO APPROVE</p> <p>a) Fees and Charges Policy 2021/22</p> <p>b) Complaints Policy</p> <p>c) HR Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary Policy • Grievance Policy • Performance Capability Policy • Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy <p>d) Finance & Resources Committee Revised Terms of Reference</p> <p><i>The Board approved the above policies and the Finance & Resources Committee Terms of Reference</i></p>	
12.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>	

The meeting ended at approximately 8.30pm.