

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 21 March 2024 at Parkshot (RBS 22)

Present: Ms Sharon Raj, Chair
Ms Kate Clarke
Ms Gabrielle Flint, Principal
Mr Nick Jones
Mr Dave Munby
Ms Jane O'Shea
Mr Matthew Pope
Mr John Riglin
Ms Claire O'Donnell
Dr Siu Wo Im
Dr Elaine Hawkins
Mr Graham Tharp, Staff Governor

In attendance: Ms Haifa Abdul Amir, Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality (VP, C&Q)
Mr Neil Wallbank, Vice Principal, Finance & Resources (VP, F&R)
Ms Laura Morgan, Clerk to the Governors

Apologies: Ms Rosa Chu

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

1.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> The Chair welcomed Dr Elaine Hawkins to her first Board meeting. The Board were saddened to learn of the death of Fiona Carthy, Head of Marketing. Condolences were sent to her family.	
2.	<u>MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2023</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 were approved as an accurate record subject to some minor formatting amendments. It was agreed that the highlighted areas in the minutes would be redacted for publication on the website	Clerk
3.	<u>MATTERS ARISING</u> Under 7b) from the minutes of 14 December 2023, there were no amendments made to the QIP following the Ofsted inspection so the QIP presented to Board on 14 th December 2023 is the final version.	
4.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> Sharon Raj and Kate Clarke declared an interest in agenda item 10a	

<p>5.</p>	<p><u>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</u></p> <p>The Principal's Report provides an update against three strategic objectives. Next year there will be an updated strategic plan and an implementation plan will be developed from that. Governors noted that the Principal's Report incorporates feedback from previous Board meetings.</p> <p>The Principal's Report reflected a very busy Spring term with planning for September and implementing areas for improvement from the QIP. It was felt that generally good progress had been made in all areas.</p> <p>Governors noted the following points from the Principal's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The course offer is being developed for September. The GLA will fund up to 103% this year. • Management are reviewing changes to the ESFA funding guidance which has just been published. • There is a new Interim Head of Art and recruitment is ongoing to the permanent role and also for Head of Estates and Programme Manager for Supported Learning. Management are exploring different ways to organise staffing to cover these hard to recruit vacancies. • The RHACC learner awards are on July 5th 2024 and the selection panel will be w/c 16th June. If governors are interested in joining the panel please let the Principal/Clerk know. <p>Sustainability was one focus for the Strategy Day. There has been a discussion at Finance and Resources Committee about where the responsibility and management/oversight of this would be best suited. The following was agreed by Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability will be the remit of Finance and Resources Committee and the Terms of Reference will be amended to reflect this. • Sustainability will be added to the Risk Register which is overseen by the Audit Committee • Development of green skills within the curriculum are covered by Quality and Standards Committee • The board will have oversight via reporting from the different Committees <p>It was suggested that the Head of Estates role could be revised to include sustainability as this may be more help with recruitment to this role.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether there should be concerns about the areas highlighted red in the financial section – this is covered later in Item 6 on the agenda.</p> <p>Governors asked whether the curriculum planning process was on schedule. This is being done differently this year using 4Cast software and is on schedule to submit the delivery plan to the GLA and to go live on the website.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Principal's Report for March 2024</i></p>	<p>Governors</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>VP (F&R)</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>FINANCE AND RESOURCES MATTERS</u></p> <p>The Vice-Principal, Finance and Resources presented the following:</p> <p>a) Management Accounts – January 2024</p> <p>The Management Accounts to January 2024 (as received by Finance and Resources Committee) highlight the need for careful ongoing financial monitoring. There is a need to be alert and take swift action to address the performance against financial targets highlighted as red in the Principal's report. Governors noted the following points relating to the Management Accounts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an additional £40k of income for Multiply funding which is not included in these accounts. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These accounts reflect 103% of GLA allocation. RHACC is currently forecast to achieve 104%-105% of target. There will be a further meeting with GLA to agree how far over the allocation they will fund. This could equate to £130-150k • There is still some time to improve the deficit this year with provision in the summer term. • Spending is over budget on gas and electricity and there was late water bill from last year which is included in these figures • The repayment of the ESFA overpayment ends in February 2025 • Pay costs are below budget (showing as green). This includes both vacant posts and more costly agency cover costs. • The Financial Recovery Plan will be reviewed for the next F&R Committee in May • Governors noted that it would be useful to include a Year End forecast column in the accounts. <p>It was noted that the loss of fee income had a negative impact on cash reserves and that long-term financial sustainability will require RHACC to increase income as further room for cost cutting was limited.</p> <p>There was a discussion around recording financial sustainability as red on the risk register.</p> <p>It was suggested that there was a pre-Board meeting session in the Autumn term on funding rules.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Management Accounts – January 2024</i></p> <p>b) Fee Rates 2024-2025</p> <p>Finance and Resources Committee received a proposal to increase fee rates by 3% and also reduce fee concessions from 50% to 30%. When compared to competitors RHACC appeared very generous. It was noted that these proposed changes will not impact on adult skills for life learners whose provision will remain fully subsidised.</p> <p>Quality and Standards Committee had reviewed the proposals related to concessions and made the following points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking concessions to London Living Wage (rather than £27k household income) may be more appropriate • Consider a link to state pension age or eligibility for pension credit (rather than over 65) for future years. <p>It was felt that there would be risks with this proposal but that these could be mitigated by careful communication.</p> <p>It was noted that it would not be possible to introduce this as a staggered/staged approach as learners could end up paying different rates for the same course.</p> <p><i>The Board approved the fee rates for 2024-2025</i></p>	<p>VP (F&R) VP (F&R)</p> <p>VP (F&R)</p>
7.	<p><u>TEACHING AND LEARNING</u></p> <p>The Vice-Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented the Teaching and Learning Quality Update</p> <p>a) Teaching and Learning Quality Update</p> <p>Quality and Standards Committee received an update on the QIP and Learner Feedback. Although it is early in the year achievement appears to be high (at 93.2%). Where teaching is graded as Requires Improvement there is an action plan and a follow up observation. There has been lots of staff development on RARPA and a good take up of CPD opportunities.</p> <p>The completion of the Learner Satisfaction Survey remains a challenge and further work is under way.</p> <p><i>The Board noted the Teaching and Learning Quality Update</i></p>	

8.	<p><u>HILLCROFT CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT</u> [ITEM REDACTED] <i>The Board noted the Update on the Hillcroft Capital Development</i></p>	
9.	<p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUDIT COMMITTEE</u> a) Risk Register and Action Plan i) Heat Map Three risks remain as red on the heat map. These relate to staffing and Hillcroft Risk 11 has been moved up because although the first wave of new systems are in place and being used, more work is required to ensure RHACC gets the full benefit of this. In addition, work on the second wave of new systems is now starting (eg new website). Risk 5 has been moved down after the Ofsted inspection. ii) Risk Register and Action Plan Governors asked about the Health and Safety audit in Item 13 (P16). Consultants have been engaged and have completed an overall H&S audit of both sites. They will return to do a fire risk assessment and an audit of the Art Department Risk 10 – the breach database is now being overseen by F&R committee. This will be added to the Action Plan. Risk 2 – there has been consideration in lowering this risk as there has been lots of training but attendance at mandatory training remains below target and management capacity is still a concern. <i>The Board approved the Risk Register and Action Plan</i></p>	VP, F&R
10.	<p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</u> a) Extensions of Terms of Office i) Kate Clarke until end of June 2024 and to remain as Chair of Quality and Standards Committee until end of June 2024 <i>This was unanimously approved</i> ii) Sharon Raj for a second term <i>This was unanimously approved</i> b) Recruitment of Independent Governors The Board received an update on the current actions to recruit new Independent Governors <i>The Board noted the update on the recruitment of Independent Governor</i> c) AoC Code of Good Governance Mapping The Board received a paper showing compliance with the revised AoC code of Good Governance. Subject to a few minor formatting and editing changes it was agreed to adopt the Code from March 2024. <i>The Board noted and approved the Adoption of the AoC Code of Good Governance</i> d) Lead Governor Safeguarding Role Description The role description for the Lead Governor for Safeguarding has been reviewed and recommended for approval by Quality and Standards Committee. Any Governor interested in the role is asked to express an interest to the Clerk <i>The Board approved the role description for the Lead Governor for Safeguarding</i></p>	Clerk Governors
11.	<p><u>ITEMS TO APPROVE</u> a) Stakeholder Engagement Strategy The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy has been reviewed following feedback from Quality and Standards Committee. Governors noted that this should reflect the equal importance given to all stakeholders not just learners. A few formatting changes were suggested to help make this clearer.</p>	VP (C&Q)

	<p><i>The Board approved the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i></p> <p>b) Exams and Assessment Policy This was recommended for approval by Quality and Standards Committee. <i>The Board approved the Exams and Assessment Policy</i></p>	
10.	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search and Governance Committee – 22 February 2024 • Capital Projects Steering Group – 15 January 2024 • Finance and Resources Committee – 29 February 2024 • Audit Committee – 7 March 2024 • Quality and Standards Committee – 14 March 2024 <p><i>The Board noted the minutes of the Standing Committees.</i></p>	
12.	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <p>There will be 4 HR policies (Pay Policy, Employee Grievance, Disciplinary and Safer Recruitment) which will be circulated for approval by Written Resolution.</p> <p>It was suggested that the summer term audit committee is moved to allow an appropriate time scale for papers to be prepared for the Board meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>