

GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

of the meeting of the Governing Body of Richmond Adult and Community College held at 6:15 pm on Thursday, 22nd September 2011 in the Studio Theatre, Parkshot

Present: Mr Geoff Varrall, Chair
Ms Sally Field, Vice Chair
Dr Tim Woolmer, Vice Chair
Mr Christopher Caldwell
Ms Christina Conroy OBE, Principal & Chief Executive
Mr Kevin Finnigan
Ms Louise Fluker
Ms Jera May
Mr Naren Ramachandran
Ms Amanda Rowlatt CBE *[items 10 to 13]*
Ms Helen Szyra
Mr Chris Williams

Apologies: Ms Sally Cole
Mr Alberto Esguevillas Lete
Dr Michael Sevitt
Mr David Sidonio

In attendance: Ms Gabrielle Flint, Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality)
Ms Judith Potter, Vice Principal (Finance & Corporate Services)
Mr Paul Coveney, Clerk to the Governing Body and College Secretary

Part 1 Non Confidential

Before opening the meeting, the Chair welcomed Chris Caldwell and Jera May as new Governors, and all present introduced themselves briefly.

1. **MINUTES**

of the meeting on 13th July 2011 were, with minor amendments to correct typing errors, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

Items 8 & 16: the Clerk confirmed that the 3 year capital paper, and the Governor advert, job description and person specification had been circulated to Governors on 15th July 2011.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

4. **ENROLMENTS AND FUNDING**

The Governing Body considered a tabled paper which was a more recent update on the previously circulated paper.

The Vice Principal (Finance & Corporate Services) reported that enrolment numbers were similar to those at a similar stage last year, but that the amount of adult learner qualification funding generated was down by c. £300K, owing to the reduction in funding rates. This difference highlighted the strategic issues facing the College, as reported to the Governing Body previously, and as being experienced by many colleges. She reminded the Governing Body that, in anticipation of the issue, the College had budgeted to achieve 80% of its funding target in 2011/12. Some more qualifications had now been added to the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF), and the College was planning a revised prospectus for January 2012. The College was also investigating the controlled use of more franchising: this could contribute to the funding target, but would have only a relatively minor impact on the College's bottom line.

The Governing Body asked what measures were being taken to ensure the probity of franchising arrangements, to which the Vice Principal (Finance & Corporate Services) replied that the College was undertaking due diligence on all potential partners, including

reports from awarding bodies as well as commercial checks and references from other colleges. The College had the opportunity to extend its use of an established partner, and would place only small contracts initially with any new partners: it would continue to seek to work with organisations which shared the College's own spirit and ethos, operating locally. Franchising was not the answer to the difficulties facing the College, but could make a useful contribution to achieving funding targets. The Principal reminded the Governing Body that there was available from the SFA (for one year only) transitional relief of up to £228K in the event that the College failed to achieve its funding target as a result of the funding changes.

The Governing Body noted the report on enrolments and funding.

5. SUMMARY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 201011 (draft)

The Vice Principal (Finance & Corporate Services) reported that the accounts showed an improvement of £17K in income, as compared with the out-turn quoted at the end of Q3. However, a similar comparison showed an adverse variance of £74K in payroll costs. This was largely due to the fact that the College had run more courses than expected towards the end of the year, which increased part-time teacher costs. There had also been an increase in payments to training partners to contribute to funding targets. The net effect was that the current out-turn showed a deficit of £272K. This assumed that the SFA would clawback the funding shortfall (4%), although this would not be definitively confirmed by the agency until November. Without clawback, this would result in a reduction of the deficit to c. £140K. The accounts were still draft: in particular, the FRS17 pension valuation had not yet been received (expected by the end of September), and the auditors would review the financial statements in October.

The Governing Body noted the draft summary management accounts.

6. ESTATES – SUMMER WORKS

The Vice Principal (Finance & Corporate Services) reported that these had been kept to a minimum. The re-tiling of the RBS roof had been completed, and CCTV had been extended at both locations as a condition of the College's insurance renewal. There had been some redecoration of common areas and some classrooms at Parkshot, including a facelift for the bar. WiFi was now fully operation in Parkshot and the RBS.

The Governing Body asked whether the concept of the enterprise hub (as discussed by the Finance & Resources Committee) had been developed following the WiFi installation. The Principal replied that the College was currently pricing an offer in the context of the local market. The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) added that the College was that evening advertising online a starter course offering independent learning facilities priced for a ten-week starter.

The Governing Body noted the report on the summer works.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

The College Secretary reported that the SMT supported a revised approach to the College risk register. This revised approach took account of the fact that the greatest strategic risk for 2011/12 was perceived to be the failure to develop a viable and robust strategy for the College for the period 2012/15, and also the internal audit recommendations relating to the structure and content of the risk register. The content of the register was work in progress for the SMT, and would be reported to the Governing Body and its Committees once developed.

The Governing Body requested that the funding issues be made explicit in the risk register.

PC

The Governing Body noted the risk management report.

8. CLERK'S REPORT

The Governing Body noted the Clerk's report for 2010/11.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk advised the Governing Body for information that the AoC had reported its concerns over the implications of the Office of National Statistics (ONS) decision to re-

classify FE colleges as public sector bodies. He would send any further clarification when received – an AoC briefing was expected shortly. Clerk

This part of the meeting closed at 7:05 pm.

The following items were considered in Part 2 of the meeting, when Jera May declared an interest in item 10.

10. GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS

[Jera May left the room.]

On the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Governing Body appointed Mr Omkar Joshi as an Independent Governor for a four-year term expiring on 31st July 2015, and also as a member of the Audit Committee for 2011/12.

On the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Governing Body appointed Professor Andrew George as an Independent Governor for a four-year term expiring on 31st July 2015, and also as a member of the Quality & Curriculum Committee for 2011/12.

The Clerk reported that Jera May had been elected as a Teaching Staff Governor on 20th September 2011.

The Governing Body set the term of Jera May's appointment at two years, expiring on 31st July 2013, and confirmed her appointment to the Quality & Curriculum Committee for 2011/12.

[Jera May rejoined the meeting.]

11. GOVERNORS' ATTENDANCE IN 2010/11

The Clerk reported that Governors' average attendance for 2010/11 had been 87%, compared with 84% the previous year.

The Governing Body noted the report on Governors' attendance in 2010/11.

12. STANDING ORDERS FOR 2011/12

The Governing Body considered the proposed draft.

On the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Governing Body approved the Standing Orders for 2011/12.

13. GOVERNORS' HANDBOOK FOR 2011/12

The Governing Body considered the proposed draft.

On the recommendation of the Search & Governance Committee, the Governing Body approved the Governors' Handbook for 2011/12.

CHAIR

After the meeting, the Principal thanked Manoj Nanda, who had left the Governing Body on 31st July 2011, for his contribution to the governance of the College over four years, presented him with a box of chocolates, and invited him to choose a piece of College art as a memento of his time as a Governor. The Chair echoed these thanks on behalf of the Governing Body.