

GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

of the non-confidential section of the meeting of the Governing Body of Richmond Adult and Community College held at 6.15 pm on Wednesday, 23rd September in the Richmond Business School, Parkshot, Richmond TW9 2RE

Present	Mr Geoff Varrall, Chair Ms Sally Field, Vice Chair Dr Tim Woolmer, Vice Chair Ms Siân Bates MBE Ms Rohini Bhattacharya Councillor Sally Cole Ms Christina Conroy OBE, Principal & Chief Executive Mr Kevin Finnigan Mr Robin Jowit OBE Mr T. C. Lim Mr Manoj Nanda Mr Sylvester Olutayo Ms Cindy Rampersaud Mr Sebastian Scotney Dr Michael Sevitt Mr Chris Williams
Apologies	Ms Louise Fluker Ms Anna Brekkeflat, Director of Finance and Information Services
In attendance	Ms Judith Potter, Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) Ms Gabrielle Flint, Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) Ms Nikki Herbertson, Director of Business Services Mr Paul Coveney, Clerk to the Governing Body

Part I (Non confidential items)

Before opening the meeting, the Chair welcomed Cindy Rampersaud (new Governor) and Nikki Herbertson (new Director of Business Services), and all present introduced themselves.

1. ACCREDITED DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body appointed Sally Field as the accredited deputy to the Chair for a term expiring on 31st July 2010.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the non-confidential section of the meeting on 2nd July 2009 were, with one minor amendment, approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Referring to item 2, the Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) reported that the College had submitted evidence to the LSC Partnership Manager that learner records in respect of ineligible learners had been corrected (and the appropriate sums repaid) between the date of the PFA audit and receipt of its report which had calculated a clawback of £47K. The Partnership Manager had verified this, as a result of which the College would not now have to pay back the £47K.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As a local resident, Sally Cole declared an interest in item 10. The Chair decided that this was not a reason for Sally Cole to withdraw from consideration of that item, which was being considered in principle only at this meeting.

5. **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

The Principal made a presentation on the organisation and operations of the College, which concluded with a summary of the main challenges and compliance requirements facing the College.

6. **DRAFT MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2008/09**

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) summarised the draft management accounts, and reported that there had been a development since the meeting papers were sent out. FRS17 is a valuation of the College's LGPS fund, calculated annually by the actuaries for the LGPS scheme. The FRS17 had now been received: it showed an increase of c. £1m in the scheme deficit. However, this was based on a valuation made in March 2009, when investment values had been particularly low. There was, however, an associated credit to the income and expenses statement, since the College's contributions for the year were also deemed to have reduced in value. This resulted in an improvement of c. £150K (subject to final adjustments) in the College's surplus for the year. The final accounts would be considered by the Audit Committee in December before being scrutinised by the Finance & Resources Committee for recommendation to the Governing Body on 17th December.

The Governing Body asked whether there was any possibility of compensation from the LSC for the very large write-off of costs incurred in the Capital Project. The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) replied that this had been mooted as a possibility at one stage, but it was now apparent that the LSC had no money available beyond the original fee support for the feasibility study.

The Governing Body asked how lettings had performed in 2008/09. The Principal replied that lettings had been badly hit by the recession: there had been a contribution of c£20K, but this did not take account of the overheads associated with lettings. Since the College wished to minimise the decant costs associated with the revised capital project, there would be a need to consider what was the most effective use of space in the College. This would be the subject of a report to the Finance & Resources Committee.

The Governing Body noted the draft management accounts for 2008/09.

7. **MARKETING AND ENROLMENT REPORT – 2009**

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) summarised the enrolments report: the current position was encouraging, although there might be a later need to take account of closures of classes which failed to reach their minimum number of learners. The Principal added that there may be a risk of running out of funding too early in the year, which would require the College to move to a "fees-only" basis of delivery, which would deter disadvantaged learners.

In considering the Learner Responsive enrolments to date, the Governing Body enquired whether there was scope to reduce the very large number of courses offered, in order to reduce overheads. The Principal agreed that fewer learners on bigger courses would help cut overheads in principle, but added that this was very difficult to achieve with the College's high proportion of disadvantaged learners, whose learner journey was resource intensive for the College to deliver effectively. The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) confirmed that the College had significantly reduced the number of courses on offer in some areas (especially Employer Responsive NVO's), but that any decision not to offer a course was more complex than might appear at first sight: for example, if a course was an essential stepping-stone on a particular development path, then its removal would adversely impact the College's ability to attract learners for that path.

The Governing Body asked whether there was any scope to look at tuition fees on leisure courses supplementing other areas of provision. The Principal replied that the fees set by the Governing Body had recognised that leisure courses were a competitive market, which had been affected by the recession, but that the College was considering whether there was an opportunity to offer customised management training (for example) at premium rates.

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) reported that the College had not yet started Employer Responsive delivery, the funding for which was on a month-by-month delivery profile. The 6 month offer related to contestable funding won by the College, the contract for which had only just been agreed, while Adult Education referred to a three-way protocol with the LSC and LBRuT and referred to adult leisure courses. With regard to tuition fees, these were running at about £1m, which

was similar to last year, although the College's target for this year was higher. The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) drew attention to the analysis of funding by faculty: this principle would also be followed in the presentation of the 2009/10 management accounts.

The Governing Body noted the marketing and enrolment report.

8. **SUMMER WORKS 2009**

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) reported that these had been fewer than in previous years: the major item had been the refurbishment of the lavatories at Parkshot.

The Governing Body noted the summer works report.

9. **RACC STRATEGY 2009/12**

The Principal reported that, following feedback from Governors at Warren House on 18th May and the Governing Body on 2nd July 2009, the strategic plan had been updated to develop the same client markets as previously identified, using a corporate management approach rather than a divisional organisation. The plan focussed on developing the curriculum, based on existing excellent delivery; developing the infrastructure to support this; and strengthening external relationships, including those with the local community. These things would need to be done over a period of great challenge for public funding. She recommended the strategic plan for the Governing Body's approval: once this had been received, the Senior Management Team would develop the required business plan, and propose the performance indicators to be used in monitoring the plan's implementation.

Principal

The Governing Body commended the plan as conveying a strong vision, with good supporting detail. The Governing Body recognised in particular the importance of the objective to work as an effective strategic partner to help to shape, determine and deliver a civic vision for the locality, and noted that this was likely to be shared by other public authorities in the local area. The Governing Body asked what was being done by the College in relation to volunteering. The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) reported that the College was using volunteers in several areas (including ICT, LRC and Reception) and that feedback was good, both from the volunteers themselves and from their supervisors. The Governing Body recognised that continuing learning could promote health in an ageing population, and the Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) said that opportunities were being addressed, especially with LBRuT's Adult Community Service. The Governing Body expressed the view that there was need for clarification of the RBS brand and its future; it was agreed to devote some time to this issue at the Governor's Weekend at Godalming in November.

Clerk

The Governing Body approved the Strategic Plan 2009/12.

The Governing Body approved the Quality Strategy as set out in the Strategic Plan 2009/12.

10. **REVISED CAPITAL PROJECT PROPOSALS**

The Principal reported that the Executive Team had used time during the summer to develop more detail regarding the capital project for Clifden within the £5m budget which the Governing Body had approved on 2nd July 2009. For instance, the accommodation strategy in the Strategic Plan 2009/12 included recognition of the need to relocate Art & Design from Clifden to Parkshot. The College planned to avoid the use of expensive temporary accommodation for temporary decant: there would be a programme of rolling moves which would be carefully managed in order to minimise disruption to provision. The College also planned to minimise the use of professional consultants consistent with the need to manage risk and gain independent advice. The detailed progress of the capital project would be presented for scrutiny by the Finance & Resources Committee.

The Governing Body asked what was the expenditure to date, to which the Principal replied that there had been none: no external resources had yet been used. The Principal agreed that the College could prepare a schematic of what was envisaged, based on the narrative from the Strategic Plan.

The Principal reported that there was one urgent matter for consideration: there was a serious problem with some areas of the roofs at Clifden, which was compromising the use of three rooms at

the site. The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) added that the College's last survey had shown that the flat roofs needed to be replaced, with the requirement for expensive scaffolding, but with no requirement for external project management. She proposed that the replacement of the flat roofs be undertaken outside the capital project, and in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

The Governing Body approved the replacement of the Clifden roofs.

The Governing Body noted the revised capital project report.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) reported, for information, that the College had now selected four partners for Employer Responsive provision in 2009/10. The Principal confirmed that these partners would be engaged under the generic contract for partner provision approved by the Governing Body on 2nd April 2009.

This part of the meeting closed at 8:30 pm

The following items were considered in Part 2 of the meeting.

12. **GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS**

The Governing Body considered the advice of the Search & Governance Committee on 9th September 2009.

The Governing Body appointed Mr David Sidonio as an Independent Governor with effect from 1st August 2009 for a four year term, expiring on 31st July 2013, and also as a member of the Employment & Organisational Development Committee for 2009/10.

The Governing Body appointed Ms Lesley Kirby as a non-Governor member of the Quality & Curriculum Committee for a one year term, expiring on 31st July 2009.

13. **GOVERNORS' ATTENDANCE 2008/09**

The Governing Body noted the Governors' attendance report for 2008/09 with approval.

14. **STANDING ORDERS 2009/10**

The Governing Body approved the Standing Orders for 2009/10.

15. **GOVERNORS' HANDBOOK 2009/10**

The Governing Body approved the Governors' Handbook for 2009/10.

16. **GOVERNOR INDUCTION**

The Governing Body noted the Governor induction process with approval.

17. **ITEMS EXCLUDED FROM PUBLICATION IN 2008/09**

The Governing Body noted the report from the Search & Governance Committee.

18. **USE OF THE CORPORATION SEAL IN 2008/09**

The Governing Body noted the report from the Clerk.

19. **ANY OTHER CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

The Governing Body decided to de-classify the following extract from its meeting on 2nd July 2009.

"The Governing Body considered a letter dated 25th June 2009 from the Principal to the LBRuT Director of Children's Services and Culture, in which she had expressed surprise that the College had not been included on the list of potential sponsors/co-partners for the Shene School Academy, and asked that the College should be included on that list for consideration by the LBRuT Cabinet. The Governing Body noted the Principal's action with approval."

CHAIR