

## 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 Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008 in the Adult Learning Suite, Parkshot, Richmond TW9 2RE

Present	Mrs Diana Rawstron, Chair Ms Christina Conroy OBE, Principal & Chief Executive Ms Rohini Bhattacharya Councillor Sally Cole Mr Kevin Finnigan Mr Robin Jowit OBE Mr Ken McCracken Mr Manoj Nanda Mr Sylvester Olutayo Mr Geoff Varrall Mr Chris Williams Dr Tim Woolmer
Apologies	Ms Mary Tyler, Vice Chair Ms Siân Bates MBE Ms Sally Field Mr T. C. Lim Dr Michael Sevitt
In attendance	Ms Judith Potter, Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) Ms Gabrielle Flint, Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) Mr Paul Coveney, Clerk to the Governing Body
Absent	Mr Andrew Slade, Vice Principal (Skills and Business Development)

Part I (Non confidential items)

#### **PRESENTATION TO A DEPARTING GOVERNOR**

Before opening the meeting, the Chair made a presentation to Ken McCracken who had resigned as a Governor with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008. The Chair thanked him for his contribution as a Governor during his period of office and paid tribute to his work on the Finance & Resources Committee.

#### 1. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the non-confidential section of the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

The minutes of the non-confidential section of the meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2008 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

#### 2. **MATTERS ARISING**

From the minutes of the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008: the Governing Body noted that the final enrolments for 2007/08 were 96.4% of target.

From the minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> November 2008: *the Governing Body appointed Sylvester Olutayo to the Finance & Resources Committee*, and the Chair thanked him for accepting the appointment.

#### 3. **CHAIR'S ACTION**

The Chair informed the Governing Body that the previous week's meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee had not been quorate. Since there were matters before the Committee which required approval, she had, at the request of the Chair of the Committee, taken Chair's Action to:

1. approve the annual report and accounts for recommendation to the Governing Body,
2. approve the College's revised room hire rates for 2008/09,

3. approve the expenditure of £57,500 including VAT for the urgent replacement of the Clifden oil tank,
4. approve the appointment of Turner and Townsend as project managers for the AiD and build stages of the Capital Project, and
5. approve changes to the HSBC mandate of authorised College signatories.

*The Governing Body approved the Chair's Action.*

4. **SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) reported that a draft of the College SAR was to be reviewed in detail on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2008, and would be posted as a draft to the LSC Gateway by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008. The final version would be submitted for the Governing Body's approval on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009, and then be posted as the final version by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009.

GF

The outlook was that the College would grade itself as 2 (Good), rather than 1 (Outstanding) last year. She stressed that there remained many areas in which performance was outstanding (for example overall success rate at 82%, and retention at 92%). Development would be required for work-based learning, some specific curriculum sectors, and employer engagement. These would be addressed in a Quality Improvement Plan.

The Clerk reported that the Governing Body re-assessment of board effectiveness was far from complete, but that indications so far reflected the College's re-grading from outstanding to good. The Chair reminded all Governors (with the exception of the new student Governors) that they were required to complete the re-assessment, as the findings needed to be included in the overall College SAR.

All

5. **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2007/08**

A revised version of page 20 of the annual report and accounts 2007/08 was presented. The revision concerned the qualification of the regularity audit in respect only of the payments made to Creative Minds. The Governing Body noted that the financial statements had received an unqualified audit.

The Governing Body enquired as to when the revaluation reserves were to be reviewed. The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) stated that this was at the choice of the College, but once it had made that choice, then the revaluation reserve would have to be reviewed every year; she also advised the Governing Body that a part of this reserve would need to be used for the Capital Project.

The Governing Body noted that the last word of note 20 to the accounts should be "taxes", and not "fees".

With regard to the increase in prepayments and accrued income, the Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) informed the Governing Body that this was largely accounted for by grant income which the College had not yet recognised in the income and expenditure account.

The Governing Body noted that the accounts showed a good financial performance, and the Chair asked the Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) to pass the Governing Body's thanks to the Finance Team for keeping such good control over the College's finances.

JP

*The Governing Body approved the annual report and accounts 2007/08.*

The Governing Body considered the Key Issues Memorandum and management letter, and noted that Key Issue 4 (Regularity Audit) had still been under review at the time when it had been submitted by Grant Thornton. The College had encouraged both sets of auditors to review the Train to Gain issue for consistency of approach.

Robin Jowit reported, as Chairman, that the Audit Committee had considered the Grant Thornton paper. Since that time, the College had decided to make a note in the report and accounts regarding contingent liability in respect of Creative Minds.

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) confirmed to the Governing Body that the financial statements were free of material misstatements, including omissions. She also reported that the words "In particular, we have considered the issues surrounding Train to Gain activities and the likelihood of any further provision being necessary" had been added to the end of point xi in the

letter of representation.

*The Governing Body approved the letter of representation.*

6. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) confirmed that the management accounts for the first quarter had been reviewed in detail by the Finance & Resources Committee, and reported that the quarter 1 position was not representative of the outturn for the full year: there was a need to re-budget in the light of Train to Gain, and a revised budget would be presented to the Finance & Resources Committee early in 2009, for recommendation to the Governing Body.

JP

*The Governing Body noted the management accounts.*

7. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2007/08**

As Chairman of the Audit Committee, Robin Jowit reported that the Committee had considered and approved the report from Tenon, noting the qualified audit opinion in respect only of Train to Gain and franchise provision. The Committee also noted that there had generally been very good progress by the College in reducing the backlog of recommendations from prior years, and that the key areas for improvement identified in prior years were now all in hand by the College.

*The Governing Body approved the internal audit report.*

8. **LSC FINANCIAL HEALTH REPORT**

*The Governing Body noted the Grade 1 (Outstanding) assessment in the LSC Financial Health Report.*

9. **SUMMARY RISK REPORT**

As Chairman of the Audit Committee, Robin Jowit reported that the Committee had considered the detailed risk report, and had concluded that it was important to focus on those risks which were increasing (rather than static), and that many of the new risks referred to different aspects of the same problem. The Principal said that this arose from the complexity of the College as an organisation, with its need to balance the requirements of education, business viability, compliance, development and partnerships.

Robin Jowit informed the Governing Body that he had asked the internal auditors for a view on the College's risk register in comparison with other FE colleges, and Tenon had indicated that most colleges used a higher level of analysis for governance review, which should be taken into account in the College's current review of its risk management approach and processes.

CJC

*The Governing Body noted the summary risk report.*

10. **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Governing Body reviewed the College's mission statement.

The Principal said it would be helpful if the mission statement included an explicit reference to the quality of the learner journey, and to the fact that the College's services should always be to a standard that the College recognises. Governors felt that "release" might be a more positive verb than "unlock", that the College's mission remained concerned with adults (the number of 14-19 learners being very small), and that there might be merit in recognising that changes in the financial and employment environment could call for different routes to enabling adults to fulfil their potential: for instance, re-skilling could be at least as important as up-skilling.

The Principal advised the Governing Body that she would re-visit the mission statement, along with the strategic plan update, at the meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009.

CJC

11. **SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY**

The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) informed the Governing Body that, with the increase of LLDD, the College now needed a policy to promote wellbeing, as well as protection, that the policy was in line with that of LBRuT, and that it had been recommended by the Quality & Standards

Committee.

*The Governing Body approved the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy.*

The Principal advised the Governing Body that a revised Child Protection policy would also be submitted early in 2009.

## 12. REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES

The Governing Body considered the reports from its Standing Committees.

As Chairman of the Audit Committee, Robin Jowit drew the attention of the Governing Body to:

- the fact that he had been assured by Tenon that there was no conflict of interest between the work Tenon had done for the College and the LSC in respect of Train to Gain, and that the two pieces of work had been managed by different partners within Tenon,
- the costs of the Widegate Street premises, which were about £100K over two years (although the Principal advised the Governing Body that there was the possibility of returning the premises to the lessor, in the event that the College could not find another use for them), and
- his strong request to the auditors to ensure in future that they submitted papers to the College management two weeks before the dates of meetings, in order to allow time for the College to consider and, if necessary, respond to those papers.

*The Governing Body noted the reports from the Committees.*

## 13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

*The Governing Body approved the Risk Management Policy.*

The Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services) presented for information a paper on enrolment and funding targets as at December 2008. She informed the Governing Body that:

- the College had received more than 1,000 enrolments for adult learner responsive courses starting in January, including the very important full Level 2 and full Level 3 targets
- Train to Gain was at only 24%, but the College's targets in this area were to be significantly reduced to about 1300, and
- Adult Safeguarded Learning was exactly on target.

The Principal added that this was generally a strong position, but more work needed to go into Employer Responsive direct provision, and that the College had returned the Apprenticeships funding to the LSC.

*The Governing Body noted the report.*

## 14. DATES FOR REMAINING MEETINGS 2008/09

The Chair confirmed that it would be necessary to hold the "reserve" meeting on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009, in order to approve the College SAR, and consider the revised business plan.

This part of the meeting closed at 7:55 pm

**CHAIR**