

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25 March 2021 at 9.00am
Via MS Teams

- Present Karol Bailey (independent) KB
 Colin Baxter (independent) CB
 Malcolm Burns (independent) MB
 Marcus Clinton (principal) MC
 Jane Cowell (independent) JC *(item 6 onwards)*
 Gary Crowe (independent) GC
 Prof Chris Gaskell (independent) CG
 Mike Gorton (independent) MG *(item 6 onwards)*
 Peter Green (independent) PG
 Dr Elizabeth Harrison (independent) EH
 Anne McKay (staff) AM *(items 6 – 18 inclusive)*
 David Pearson (independent, Chair) DP
 Prof Eunice Simmons (independent) ES *(item 6 onwards)*
 Alastair Taylor (independent) AT
 Liz Watts (staff) LW *(items 1 – 18 inclusive)*
- Attending Graeme Lavery (vice principal, finance and resources) GL *(items 1-18 inclusive)*
 Matthew Gower (vice principal quality and curriculum) MGower *(items 1- 18 inclusive)*
 Peter Greenall (assistant principal and dean of HE) PGreenall *(items 1- 18 inclusive)*
 Paul Spearritt (assistant principal) PS *(items 1-18 inclusive)*
 Louise Woodman (human resources director) LW *(items 1-18 inclusive)*
 Sharon Yates (assistant principal) SY *(items 1-18 inclusive)*
 Iain Clarke (assistant principal) IC *(items 1-18 inclusive)*
 Trudie McGuinness (assistant principal) TM *(items 1-18 inclusive)*
 Charlotte Brunt (SA president) CB *(items 1-5 inclusive)*
 Kate Cole (SA member) KC *(items 1-5 inclusive)*
 Jennifer Harper (staff, observer) *(items 1 – 6 inclusive)*
 Jackie Schillinger (company secretary) JS

PART A unless stated

	Content
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence
1.1	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Andrew Fletcher, Angela Potter, Chelsey Rowntree, Jon Furber and Paul Weston. Prof Eunice Simmons and Anne McKay had indicated they would be joining the meeting a little late.

<p>2.</p> <p>2.1</p>	<p>Appointment of members</p> <p>On recommendation from the Search and Governance Committee it was RESOLVED: To appoint Andrew Fletcher as a member of the Reaseheath College Board for a period of three years.</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p>	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>MC, JC and PG declared an interest in item 7.1 and took no part in the decision on that item. The interests of MC and ES as members of the University of Chester Council were noted. The interest of PG in relation to item 8.1 presented by a family member was noted.</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p>	<p>Minutes for approval</p> <p>Parts A and B minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2020 were approved as a correct record and the action log was reviewed for assurance.</p> <p>Parts A and B minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2021 were approved as a correct record.</p>
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Student Association (SA) Report</p> <p>CB and KC presented the SA report for information and assurance. The SA presentation covered activities and developments on learner voice initiatives, projects work, societies, RAG, entertainments, sports, sustainability with work with IC looking for a sustainability rep in every dept, Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) with work on pronouns and pride fest, and safeguarding and the refreshed structure of the SA. CB shared examples of the work online during the pandemic. This has included the Sign Language Society run by student Sophie Tanner providing a well-attended six-week online course on sign language and sports sessions provided online, as well as online entertainment and online RAG events. In terms of projects, the SA have created a journal of all projects that provides good evidence of all the work completed and ongoing. CB shared a recent initiative with the NHS where the SA are filming a covid vaccination promotion film for younger people and this will be promoted by the NHS as well as on the college website and social media. She also noted that all society chairs have received mental health training to support them in their roles. DP thanked CB and KC for the inspiring presentation and expressed his view that he felt privileged to work with such a professional and effective SA. EH added that it was very pleasing to see such external reach and collaboration as well and AT suggested the college could consider some kind of formal recognition for individual SA members that could support them in progression and career prospects. All members welcomed the SA presentation and ongoing contribution and received the report for information and assurance, with thanks.</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p>Strategy</p> <p>Strategic Plan Monitoring Report 2020-21: MC presented the strategic plan monitoring report, providing a mid-year summary of progress across the areas of the plan for year two of the strategy. He highlighted the white paper implications, sustainability and people plan in particular in his presentation as the offer and estates elements were being looked at in more detail later on the agenda.</p> <p>Members welcomed the report and the progress clearly shown. PG requested and received assurance that the continuing professional development (CPD) commitment is a budgetary commitment and so managers should be able to release staff to attend CPD. AT noted the challenge of prioritising the</p>

	<p>numerous strands and the need from a governance point of view to have oversight of capacity to delivery and how objectives are prioritised. MC provided assurance that the team has capacity and has resourced key areas, which is evidenced in the progress now showing, though he acknowledged that it requires ongoing awareness and management. MG requested and received assurance that the team are not underestimating the emerging challenge of the new student intake in terms of support and recovery and that the college will access the funding available. LW added that the people plan includes looking at skills audits across different areas to ensure they focus on the right areas and succession planning, and will also adapt the current PDR process to reduce unnecessary burden on staff but ensure it remains effective. DP requested and received assurance on a very strong narrative on the strategic plan cascaded throughout the college. JC noted that she has not seen the communication of strategic vision, plan and priorities done as well in any of her other governor roles and all agreed that the leadership and communications in this area are very strong. Assurance was received that the strategic report to the next meeting in July can indicate how senior management are prioritising and coordinating across the various strategic strands.</p>
6.3	<p>Offer and Delivery Model Review and Emerging Recommendations: MGower presented his strategic report for discussion in the meeting, encompassing the work over past eighteen months and looking ahead to the next three to five years. He noted that initiatives are underway in some areas and his presentation went on to cover key external drivers including qualifications reforms, T Levels, FE White paper, adult learning, digital revolution, sustainability, financial resilience, student support and student growth. He went on to explain the key recommendations to include a review of the FE offer, the introduction of T Levels, enhancing the study programme, a new look adult offer, the increased use of digital and blended learning and aligning the college environment and estates strategy to support the strategic plan. He noted the expected benefits of these strategic priorities will be that the college provides a leading-edge curriculum, an improved pedagogical approach, and excellent student experience on and off campus, a sustainable curriculum and a financially resilient organisation.</p>
6.4	<p>Members welcomed the recommendations in the report. PG requested and received more information on the delivery model in terms of time in college and blended learning. MGower confirmed that the aim is to retain an element of remote learning for four day programmes, and it will be considered programme by programme to ensure the blend is appropriate and impacts on transport and residential aspects are effectively managed as well as the estates strategy supporting the curriculum delivery plan by developing more study spaces and learning hubs around campus. DP requested and received assurance on risk review of the external drivers, recommendations and expected benefits and MGower confirmed that the key risk is getting the balance right between the student experience, the digital revolution and the financial resilience aspect. ES gave her view that the recommendations show the right approach and she added that the University have introduced a new grade of learning facilitator to the staffing to support student access to practical technological resource, in a cost effective way. DP thanked members for their feedback in the strategic discussion and MGower for his report, received, with thanks.</p>
6.5	<p>Vision for Environment and Estates Strategy: GL presented the estates strategy update report, with recommendations on the capital bids and the vision for the environment and estates strategy presented for approval. MB gave his input and support to the strategy and bids which had been discussed in detail at the Estates Development and Property Group. PG requested and received further detail on the various bids and all members welcomed the good potential and opportunities presented. EH requested and received assurance that strategic reporting by the Principal each year in July will aim to pull together all the strands of the strategic plan, with the curriculum offer supported by the various strands of the people plan and the estates strategy. DP added that the Board will continue to aim to achieve a good balance between strategic time and time spent on its monitoring role, so that governors have sufficient time on strategic overview. CG noted that at some point it would be good to spend some</p>

6.6	<p>time on the carbon plan. GL agreed and provided an update on funded maintenance work on heating boilers and roofing, as well as the plan to re-submit the solar panel farm funding bid, which will be taken forward with overview from the Estates Development and Property Group. Following discussion, members fully supported the vision for the environment and estates strategy and the submission of bids to the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund and the T Level Capital Fund, with the confirmation that the bids are on the basis of no match funding from the college.</p> <p>Reaseheath College Environment and Estates Strategy: RESOLVED: The Reaseheath College Board approves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. The Reaseheath College Vision for Environment and Estates Strategy II. The submission of the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund bid III. The submission of the T Level Capital Fund bid.
7.	Part B Confidential item
8.	<p>2020-21 Strategic Risk Monitoring</p> <p>8.1 Marketing Strategy Implementation Update: LW presented her update report, including a recruitment update, strategic priorities and tactics and responsiveness this year due to the impact of Covid. Members welcomed the clarity of the strategic priorities given to the UCR brand, T Levels and Adult provision, leading edge, labour and market analysis research and digital/CRM. ES added that a recent UCAS survey indicated that recruitment is largely from those whose families are already in the land-based industry and so it will be important to ensure marketing resource is given to contacting parents and carers of the learners as well as looking at ways of reaching to those not already with land-based industry connections. On this point, JC noted that the promotion of science and STEM in outreach work to schools is key to promoting land-based outside of its traditional market. TM confirmed that the college careers work is focusing on this in its outreach work and there are also events such as Farm to Fork, which is focused on schools and achieves good engagement. GC queried how the college measures impact in relation to its activities in this area. LW provided some detail on the impact seen on website traffic and performance of advertisements, which the college has seen transferred through as an increase in application in those areas. She noted that it has been more difficult to assess impact of the promotional events this year but there is increased traffic on the website and engagement with the virtual content which shows that people are engaging. DP thanked LW for her report and members for their input and the report was received, with thanks.</p> <p>8.2 Management accounts and cash flow College: GL presented the executive summary of period 7 management accounts for the College showing an improving picture on period 6 and solid position on cash flow and KPIs with no concerns on bank covenants to year end and a forecast surplus which is strong in all the circumstances, with good student growth expected for next year. Members welcomed the solid position and received the report for information and assurance, with thanks.</p> <p>8.3 Part B Confidential item.</p> <p>8.4 Strategic Risk Board Assurance Report: MC presented his executive summary report for information and assurance and members welcomed the implementation of the RSM4Risk system and looked forward to seeing the full Board Assurance Framework report presented at the summer meeting.</p>
9.	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>9.1 The Chair's report was received for information.</p>

10.	Principal's Report (including Covid Update)
10.1	The Principal's report, including an update on Covid, was received for information and assurance.
11.	Safeguarding, Prevent and Wellbeing Update
11.1	The Safeguarding, Prevent and Wellbeing Update was received for information and assurance.
11.2	It was agreed that a presentation on safeguarding and wellbeing services staffing and resource and plans for the new academic year be made to the Board at its July meeting for assurance that sufficient resource and planning is in place for incoming students as the sector-wide pressure on mental health support services is recognised as an emerging risk.
12.	Health and Safety Update
12.1	The Health and Safety Update was received for information and assurance.
13.	Committee Reports for Information
13.1	The following committee reports were received for information and assurance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search and Governance Committee Report • Quality and Standards Committee Report • Higher Education Committee Report • Finance and General Purposes Committee Report • Audit Committee Report • Confidential Part B – Subsidiary company Report
14.	Items for Approval
14.1	RESOLVED: To approve the Governance Self-Assessment Report and Development Plan
14.2	RESOLVED: To approve the Governor Conflicts of Interest Policy, the Reaseheath College Board Constitution, the Governor Code of Conduct and the Statement on Student and Staff Engagement.
14.3	RESOLVED: To approve the Higher Education Tuition Fees 2022-23
15.	Items for Information
15.1	The following items were received for information and assurance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Assurance Report on the Student Experience. • Governor Link Visit Engagement Summary Report • Governor's Delivering T Levels ETF course summary
16.	Any other business (notified to chair/clerk in advance)
16.1	There was no other business reported to the meeting.
17.	Any items for escalation to strategic risk register
17.1	There were no items to escalate to the strategic risk register not already covered in the meeting.

17.2	DP checked that everyone had had the chance to raise any issues that they wished to during the meeting. No further matters were raised.
18.	Date of next meeting
18.1	The dates of the next meetings were confirmed as <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thursday 20 May 2021 strategy/development session• Thursday 15 July 2021 at 9.30am

The meeting closed at 12.15pm.

Confirmed as a correct record: 15.07.21