

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 15 July 2021 at 2.00pm
Via Microsoft Teams

- Present Karol Bailey (independent) KB
 Colin Baxter (independent) CB
 Marcus Clinton (principal) MC
 Jane Cowell (independent) JC
 Gary Crowe (independent) GC
 Prof Chris Gaskell (independent) CG
 Jon Furber (independent, associate) JF (*item 8 onwards*)
 Mike Gorton (independent) MG
 Peter Green (independent) PG
 Dr Elizabeth Harrison (independent) EH
 Anne McKay (staff) AM (*items 1 – 16 inclusive*)
 David Pearson (independent, Chair) DP (*item 4 onwards*)
 Angela Potter (independent) AP
 Prof Eunice Simmons (independent) ES (*item 4 onwards*)
 Liz Watts (staff) LW (*items 1 – 16 inclusive*)
- Attending Graeme Lavery (vice principal, finance and resources) GL (*items 1-16 inclusive*)
 Matthew Gower (vice principal quality and curriculum) MGower (*items 1- 16 inclusive*)
 Peter Greenall (assistant principal and dean of HE) PGreenall (*items 1- 16 inclusive*)
 Paul Spearritt (assistant principal) PS (*items 1-16 inclusive*)
 Louise Woodman (human resources director) LW
 Sharon Yates (assistant principal) SY (*items 1-16 inclusive*)
 Iain Clarke (assistant principal) IC (*items 1-16 inclusive*)
 Trudie McGuinness (assistant principal) TM (*items 1-16 inclusive*)
 Amber Jackson (SA member) AJ (*item 7*)
 Robert Sparkes (student life co-ordinator) RS (*item 7*)
 Jackie Schillinger (company secretary) JS

Part A unless stated

item	Content
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence
1.1	The Vice Chair, EH, welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Andrew Fletcher, Alastair Taylor, Paul Weston and Malcolm Burns. Chris Gaskell had indicated that he would be joining the meeting a little late. The Chair DP would be joining the meeting after item 3.
1.2	The meeting was quorate and remained quorate throughout.
2.	Declarations of interest
2.1	DP and CB had declared an interest in item 3 and took no part in the decision on that item. MC, JC and PG declared an interest in item 10.1 and took no part in the decision on that item. The interest of ES as

	Vice Chancellor of the University of Chester and a member of the University of Chester Council was noted. MC's interest as a member of the University of Chester Council was noted.
3.	Appointment of Governors
3.1	On recommendation from the Search and Governance Committee it was RESOLVED:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. To re-appoint David Pearson, Colin Baxter and Malcolm Burns as independent members of the college board for a period of three years. II. To reappoint Jon Furber and Paul Weston as independent associate members of the college board for a period of one year. III. To appoint Evelyn Davies Jones as an independent member of the college board for a period of three years from 1 August 2021. IV. To appoint Phil Gibbon as the academic staff member of the college board for a period of three years from 1 August 2021.
4.	Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021
4.1	Part A minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 were received and approved as a correct record and the action log was reviewed for assurance.
4.2	Confidential Part B minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 were received and approved as a correct record
5.	Chair's Report
5.1	The Chair's report was received for information. DP thanked the executive team and all staff for the continued work to maintain the student experience throughout the challenging year, with good assurances evident from committee meetings this term on solid quality and finances. He also thanked all governors for their continued commitment and contributions over the year and the company secretary for keeping everything on track. He gave particular thanks to staff governor Anne McKay for her service to the Board over her two terms as academic staff governor and he also thanked Richard Ratcliffe who has stepped down from his co-opted role on the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The Chair noted that this year he had been able to visit the campus more and meet with staff and students, including at Student Association lunches and that he had continued his regular meetings with the Principal, as well as meeting with the local MPs this term on campus. He explained the governance self-assessment process being carried out this year and encouraged all to respond to this to give their views. All members expressed thanks to AM and to Richard Ratcliffe for their contributions to the Board and looked forward to the autumn term when thanks could be made in person at a planned social gathering.
6.	Principal's Report
6.1	The Principal's report, including an update on Covid, was received for information and assurance. ES welcomed the strong national student survey results indications, after a very challenging year. PG queried the red RAG rating on the adult offer and MC explained that this was due to the complex funding picture and the fact that the college does not have a large amount of adult offer and so has a significant amount of work to do to maximise this opportunity and he provided assurance that the next couple of years should see this develop very well but it is an initial challenge. PG noted the well managed process in relation to the subsidiary company and DP echoed this and expressed thanks to the executive team and the subsidiary company staff for the professional approach taken throughout. DP also thanked the subsidiary company board members for their oversight of this process. JC raised a discussion point on the government specialisation agenda and the associated risks of this. She also requested and received assurance that the overarching adult offer is being brought together centrally and promoted as a complete offer.
7.	Student Association Report
7.1	AJ and RS 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, Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and safeguarding. They explained that focus has been on enhancing the learner voice, which has been very successful, and the projects and societies

	<p>work has also been very successful, with twenty-two societies up and running. They explained that RAG events had been affected by Covid but events that had taken place included the raft race and the pop-up pub. The students updated members on plans for next year, including changes to the Student Association and the focus on three local Nantwich charities for next year's RAG. They confirmed that whilst entertainments has been difficult this year, online events did reach a different audience and this aspect can be built on next year to be more inclusive. All members welcomed the SA presentation and the excellent ongoing contribution to student life, the college and the community and received the report for information and assurance, with thanks.</p>
8.	Strategic Objectives and KPIs
8.1	<p>Strategic Objectives Report – Monitoring report 2020-21 and confirmation of strategic objectives for 2021-22: MC presented his report. He noted that the five-year strategic plan was signed off by the Board with the first year of delivery being 19/20. He confirmed that the core aim was to have less over-arching strategic priorities over a longer period to ensure demonstrable progress made and so that staff have a clearer understanding and thus buy in to the strategic priorities. He added that in further support an annual development plan is produced each year with the objectives coming out of the business planning process and these plans support the strategic direction of the college but also address specific local points where necessary. He explained that his report provided the detailed tracking for each section with an executive summary providing the key points in each case and that KPIs have been monitored through the various committees in the areas in which they substantially sit, which is finance, quality and people. Good assurance has been given that the college has performed well across all the KPIs and there are no major concerns. He gave assurance that in the autumn term the executive team will be able to report the final picture on performance against KPIs once the signed off finance and academic results are known and then the KPIs for 2021/22 can be proposed for approval.</p>
8.2	<p>Members considered the report and welcomed the good progress made. They noted the position on KPIs and supported the proposed strategic objectives in 2021/22 as part of the approved five-year strategic plan. A number of comments were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PG welcomed the excellent progress this year. He questioned the RAG rating on staff CPD and LW confirmed that this year progress has been somewhat disrupted and that the key focus going forwards is on specialist upskilling with the budget seeking to enable this. JC endorsed the view that the report evidenced impressive progress and she also requested and received assurance that the strategic oversight of the CPD objective would be reported via LW's reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. - JC noted that the academic tutorial support was crucial and received assurance that the executive team recognise the careful balance and need to manage any changes to the pastoral support model carefully. - JC requested and received assurance that the contribution to central costing remained a priority this year. - GC noted the difficulties but also the opportunities in the current situation and queried whether the college has considered pushing delivery of objectives faster with more resource. MC confirmed that the budget reflects increased resourcing in crucial areas such as T levels and level 3, 4, 5 and the development of the HE offer. GC welcomed the assurance and encouraged the team to continue to uplift the level of ambition and speed.
8.3	RESOLVED: To receive the Strategic Objectives Report for 2020-21 for information and assurance and to approve the Strategic Objectives for 2021-22, in accordance with year three of the five-year strategic plan.
8.4	<p>Strategic Risk Board Assurance Report – for information and assurance (including ESFA finance dashboard): MC presented the strategic risk board assurance report. Good assurance was taken from the report that risk continues to be identified and managed well. JC noted that the ability level of students coming through in the autumn may be very different to previous years and MC provided assurance that the college has plans to provide support, with the college working with the national citizenship service over the summer to provide transition support and there is funding to support maths and English. GL provided an overview of the ESFA Financial Health Record for assurance. PG asked for</p>

	<p>some clarification on staff costs increase over time, and GL confirmed a number of external factors have increased the cost of employment. He also confirmed that the specialist staff costs for a land-based college are greater than general further education colleges and the growth in these specialist areas therefore impacts on staff costs to a greater degree. The annual risk management report had been considered in the Audit Committee meeting and the annual report and risk management policy recommended for approval by the Audit Committee.</p>
8.5	<p>Strategic Risk: Safeguarding and Wellbeing Update Report: The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Update was presented by MGower and received for information and assurance, with updates from the summer term provided in the meeting. As agreed at the previous meeting, the report included information on the safeguarding and wellbeing services staffing and resource and plans for the new academic year for assurance that sufficient resource and planning is in place for incoming students. He provided assurance that the latest Pulse 3 student survey results indicate that students still feel safe (99.5% of learners felt safe with online learning and 98.7% of learners felt safe on campus). Members took assurance from the report that risk continues to be identified and managed, with current recruitment taking place to fill the required roles for September. Actions and themes for next year were also highlighted and the supportive transition work ongoing over the summer. In relation to the forthcoming Ofsted report on peer on peer sexual abuse, MGower provided an overview of the requirements of this report and gave assurance that the college is very secure on this area but will review and develop its approach to this over the summer and an update can be provided in the December meeting. DP asked about the increase in external agency reporting and requested and received assurance from MGower that the loop is closed following referral and we have an audit trail that this has been completed.</p>
8.6	<p>Strategic Risk: Health and Safety: The Health and Safety Update was presented by GL and received for information and assurance. There were no issues of significant concern raised and members took good assurance that risk continues to be well managed in this area.</p>
8.7	<p>RESOLVED: The Annual Risk Management Report and Risk Management Policy are approved.</p>
9.	<p>Financial Strategy – to approve budget 2021-22</p>
9.1	<p>Part B Confidential item</p>
9.2	<p>Draft Budget 2021-22 and ESFA college financial funding return (CFFR)– for approval: GL presented the draft budget and commentary and the ESFA CFFR. The Finance and General Purposes Committee chair confirmed that the committee had reviewed the draft budget in its meeting and recommended it for approval. Assurance reported from the committee included their support for the increasing engagement in business planning that was evident from the presentation on the business planning template in the committee meeting. They also reported that the risk scoring is very useful and the key points pulled out, such as the substantial increase in income with the commercial income flagged as this alerts the Board to the higher risk areas. In terms of staff costs, GC noted that the risk is that the costs go up but there is some headroom in the staff budget forecast and this has been very important in previous years. He noted that there is risk inherent in the income but there is also headroom in costs and he supported the proposed budget. The meeting received the draft budget for approval and, following consideration and assurance, confirmed it was content to approve the budget for 2021-22.</p>
9.3	<p>RESOLVED: The Annual Budget for 2021/22 and the ESFA CFFR submission are approved.</p>
9.4	<p>Part B confidential item.</p>
10.	<p>Part B – Confidential item</p>
11.	<p>Items for Approval/Ratification</p>
11.1	<p>RESOLVED: Committee Terms of Reference approved for 2021-22.</p>
11.2	<p>RESOLVED: Calendar of Board meetings 2021-22 approved.</p>
11.3	<p>RESOLVED: Annual Re-appointment of Internal and External Auditors approved.</p>
11.4	<p>RESOLVED: Internal Audit Plan 2021-22 approved.</p>
11.5	<p>RESOLVED: External Audit Strategy Memorandum approved.</p>
11.6	<p>RESOLVED: Regularity Audit Self-Assessment Questionnaire approved.</p>
11.7	<p>RESOLVED: FE Tuition Fees 2021-22 approved.</p>

11.8	RESOLVED: I. Bid submission and documentation for Stage 2 Institute of Technology Bid ratified II. Chair's Action on submission of Post 16 Capacity Fund 2021-22 Bid ratified.
12.	College Reports for Information and Assurance
12.1	The Use of College Seal Report was received for information.
13.	Committee Reports
13.1	The Search and Governance Committee Report was received for information.
13.2	The Quality and Standards Committee Report was received for information.
13.3	The Higher Education Committee Report was received for information.
13.4	The Finance and General Purposes Committee Report was received for information.
13.5	The Audit Committee Report was received for information.
14.	Any Other Business (reported to Chair/Clerk in advance)
14.1	There was no other business reported to the meeting.
15.	Escalation of any items to Strategic Risk Register
15.1	There were no items to escalate to the strategic risk register not already covered in the meeting.
15.2	DP checked that everyone had had the chance to raise any issues that they wished to during the meeting. No further matters were raised.
16.	Date of next meetings
16.1	The dates of the next meetings were confirmed as: 23 September 2021 9.30am – development/strategic session 11 November 2021 9.30am 9 December 2021 9.30am

The meeting closed at 5.15pm

Approved as a correct record: 11 November 2021