

**REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD**

**BOARD MEETING**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2021 at 9.30am  
Via MS Teams**

Present            Karol Bailey (independent) KB  
                       Malcolm Burns (independent) MB  
                       Marcus Clinton (principal) MC (*items 1 – 16 inclusive*)  
                       Jane Cowell (independent) JC  
                       Gary Crowe (independent) GC  
                       Evelyn Davies-Jones (Independent) EDJ  
                       Prof Chris Gaskell (independent) CG  
                       Phil Gibbon (independent) PGibbon (*items 1 – 16 inclusive*)  
                       Mike Gorton (independent) MG (*items 1 – 16 inclusive*)  
                       Peter Green (independent) PG  
                       Dr Elizabeth Harrison (independent) EH  
                       David Pearson (independent, Chair) DP  
                       Angela Potter (independent) AP  
                       Alastair Taylor (independent) AT  
                       Liz Watts (staff) LW (*items 1 – 16 inclusive*)  
                       Paul Weston (independent) PW (*items 1 – 16 inclusive*)

Attending        Graeme Lavery (vice principal, finance and resources) GL (*items 1-16 inclusive*)  
                       Paul Spearritt (assistant principal) PS (*items 1-11 inclusive*)  
                       Louise Woodman (human resources director) LW (*items 1-16 inclusive*)  
                       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*)  
                       Robert Sparkes (student life co-ordinator) RS (*item 7*)  
                       Jackie Schillinger (company secretary) JS

**PART A unless stated**

item	Content
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b>
1.1	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from members Andrew Fletcher, Prof Eunice Simmons, Colin Baxter, Kate Cole, Kalliopi Angelakopoulos and associate member Jon Furber.
1.2	The meeting was quorate and remained quorate throughout.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of interest</b>
2.1	The interest of MC as a member of the University of Chester Council was noted. There were no declared interests that gave rise to a conflict of interest in respect of the agenda items.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Confirmation of committee memberships and governor links</b>
3.1	The 2021-22 committee structure and membership and the governor link arrangements were received and approved.

<b>4.</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2021 were approved as a correct record. The rolling action log was received and noted with actions completed or on track.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Chair's Report</b>
5.1	The Chair's report was received for information and members expressed thanks to all college staff.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Principal's Report</b>
6.1	The Principal's report was received for information. JC noted that she sees the same staffing issues in the school sector and it's a significant national issue. EH requested and received more information on the teach out in relation to provision to a key employer. MC noted the college's disappointment and provided assurance on several fronts in relation to other key partnerships that are strong and building and on relationship management generally. SY provided assurance on the strong outcomes for apprentices.
<b>7.</b>	<b>Student Association Annual Report</b>
7.1	Annual Report: RS, Student Life Co-ordinator presented the report. The Student Association Annual Report and Accounts were received for information and assurance, with thanks. DP on behalf of the Board thanked the Student Association for all their hard work and commitment to the college. He noted that an additional purpose could be included for completeness to cover the role the SA has in assurance reporting back to the Board. JS noted a further minor amendment suggested to the Constitution to clarify the reference to indemnity. With these suggestions supported, the Board was content to approve the Constitution.
<b>7.2</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Student Association Constitution.</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion</b>
8.1	Annual Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Report: LW presented the annual report. She highlighted the progress made this year against the new EDI objectives agreed at the start of the academic year, with progress in several areas impacted by Covid. Looking ahead, she noted that the focus for the EDI committee will be working with John Dyer around driving EDI across the college through an inclusive leadership approach, focusing on leading, supporting and promoting; and using the staff conference as a launch platform, with the EDI Committee acting as a central co-ordination point, bringing together good practice and co-ordinating a cross college approach. She confirmed that the EDI Policy had been reviewed and no substantive changes had been made currently but that the objectives and policy would be reviewed in line with the work planned this coming year. JC suggested that it would be helpful to see direction of travel and more on disadvantaged student in future reporting. She also wondered if the balance at the moment was perhaps more on inclusivity whilst at college rather than proactive external engagement with underrepresented groups particularly around STEM. LWoodman confirmed this more proactive community engagement approach was the aim and would be considered at the forthcoming EDI staff conference and going forwards. LW and GL explained how they were working with Landex as well on this. PGreen requested and received assurance that the Board will see an action plan coming through. KB as link member of the EDI Committee commended LW and the committee and emphasised that resource will be needed once the committee has the feedback from the conference and so that can take action to implement agreed initiatives. Members thanked LW for her comprehensive report, noted the progress made and that it had been limited in several areas by Covid pressures on time and resources this year.
<b>8.2</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Safeguarding, Prevent and Wellbeing</b>
9.1	Annual Safeguarding, Prevent and Wellbeing Report: The Annual Safeguarding, Prevent and Wellbeing Report was received for information and assurance. TM highlighted the significant work undertaken and ongoing around harassment and sexual misconduct, and in relation to care standards generally, including an RSM internal audit, a Landex care standards audit, an assessment against the Office for Students expectations on harassment and sexual misconduct and collaborative work with the

<p>9.2</p> <p>9.3</p>	<p>University of Chester. MG requested and received assurance from TM that the Landex care standards audit was rigorous and thorough with a keen critical eye. JC noted that it was good to see that the issue of peer-on-peer harassment and sexual misconduct was mainstream within the college BeReady programme. TM updated members on the implementation of the CPOMs system and responded to LW's query to confirm that year on year comparisons of referrals will be possible with CPOMs. TM also confirmed that she had made a request for Cheshire East to review the college reporting and policies and she was awaiting a response. She confirmed that she is proactively seeking to engage with them. LW noted that staffing resource is key in this area and TM confirmed securing sufficient resource is a priority. GL noted that the data from CPOMs will be different and so we will see a difference initially that needs to be understood in context.</p> <p>In terms of Prevent referrals, TM explained that there had been one referral in 2020-21.</p> <p>Members received the annual report including the assessment against the Office for Students Expectations in relation to harassment and sexual misconduct, and took good assurance from the reporting and assessment, noting the recommended enhancements to be actioned. The meeting noted the termly safeguarding update to the Board could provide a progress report. DP on behalf of the Board expressed thanks to TM, the executive team and all the front-line team for the tremendous work that they do.</p>
<p><b>10.</b></p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p>	<p><b>Health and Safety</b></p> <p>Annual Health and Safety Report: The Annual Health and Safety Report was received for information and assurance. GL presented a summary of the report, noting that there had been 4 RIDDOR reports in the year with assurance on reporting, investigation and closing down with lessons learned. He highlighted that the focus this year is on near misses and unsafe acts reporting as there is still work to do on this. AT provided his feedback as link governor for health and safety, and he summarised his visits to college and walk arounds with the Head of Health and Safety and GL. He requested that link governors ask about health and safety in the curriculum areas when they undertake their link visits to embed this culture of near miss and unsafe acts awareness and reporting. He also suggested it would be timely for the Quality and Standards Committee to have a deep dive into what is being done to ensure work placements are safe. PGibbon noted that from his experience working with employers on work placements there is a strong emphasis on instilling a safety culture with employers and this is well received generally, and in Agriculture there is a growing acceptance, and the college works to support in this building culture with employers. AT provided assurance that he had followed up on the visit to the Hurlleston site and had gained assurance on measures in place there. CG emphasised the importance of near misses and closing the loop. EH provided feedback from her link visit to Equine, where the anticipation of potential issues was evident as well as near misses and she thought that this was very useful to encourage via conversations on link visits.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: To approve the Health and Safety Policy.</b></p>
<p><b>11.</b></p> <p>11.1</p>	<p><b>Strategic Plan Monitoring</b></p> <p>Strategic KPI performance 2020-21 and Targets/KPI 2021-22: MC presented his report for assurance on outcomes for 2020-21 and for approval of the Targets and KPI for 2021-22. MC reported that the picture for 2020-21 KPI is strong with most KPI Green which is pleasing given the challenges presented by the pandemic and the impact on the college financially, ways of working and student experience. He took the meeting through the red and amber rated areas in detail and provided an update on progress in these areas. He noted that the KPI for quality have been reviewed with the Quality and Standards Committee and represented by the target column for 2021-22. He added that the KPI for Finance and HR are monitored through the respective committees and are the normal sector KPI monitored in these areas, with the finance KPI largely taken from the budget for 2021-22 which was approved at the July Board meeting. PG requested and received assurance that the KPI review also included the health and safety KPI and MC and GL confirmed these would be added to the health and safety reporting going forwards. AT and PG gave assurance that the academic quality KPI had been thoroughly reviewed, tested, and challenged by the Quality and Standards Committee. CG noted that the improved National</p>

	<p>Student Survey scores had been discussed in the HE Committee and were welcomed. GC observed that the college could also look to set some targets in relation to other areas such as employer engagement and sustainability and MC and GL confirmed that they were looking at this in line with the development of these strategies this academic year, starting in January.</p>
11.2	<p>Strategic Objectives update: MC provided an update report on the 2021-22 strategic objectives, updated in the various areas of executive team strategic responsibility. EH emphasised that the Human Resources strategic area would need resource to move forwards with these objectives. PG queried whether the college considered it had the senior leadership resource to deliver the strategy and MC confirmed the interim management resource in place to cover the current Vice Principal vacancy. He confirmed that the curriculum review is progressing well and should be ready to come back with proposals to the Board after Easter, with some proposals ready for implementation in September and some more medium to long term. JC recommended a resource for supporting and sharing best practice on knowledge retention. GL noted on the staffing capacity point that the work the college is doing on systems and process should help. Members welcomed the progress made so far this year on the strategic initiatives, given the continuing challenging circumstances.</p>
11.3	<p><b>RESOLVED: To approve the Performance Targets and Key Performance Indicators for 2021-22</b></p>
11.4	<p>Strategic Risk Review: MC presented the executive summary of the key strategic risks and risk movements following the executive in depth review of the risks in the autumn term. Members received the report for information and assurance and noted the feedback from committee reviews of risk and in particular the increased rating proposed for the staffing risk for this year.</p>
11.5	<p>Part B confidential item.</p>
11.6	<p>Financial Reporting: Statutory Accounts: GL explained that the financial statements were awaiting finalisation due to the final reconciliation figures still required from ESFA to complete the final group accounts. He noted that the Audit Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee had received the draft external audit completion report which provided strong assurance but that final reporting must wait until the ESFA information is received. He confirmed that a formal request to submit late accounts has been made and no problem with this is expected. The meeting noted that a single agenda item meeting on Teams would be needed in the New Year to approve the accounts. He also provided an explanation of the accounting treatment of the closure of the subsidiary company that was dealt with over two financial years due to the timing of this final reconciliation, with a near net zero impact on the operating position.</p>
11.7	<p>Financial Reporting: Management Accounts Period 3: GL presented the management accounts for period 3 and provided detail on the areas of variance. He provided assurance that the executive team is reporting back at its weekly meetings on the finance action tracker to ensure these areas are managed and mitigated. MC noted that the approved budget had included the proposed 1% pay award for all staff and that the executive team are able to now confirm their recommendation that this be confirmed and paid, backdated to 1 October 2021. Members welcomed the recommendation and confirmed their support for the staff pay award as previously approved in the budget.</p>
11.8	<p><b>RESOLVED: To approve the payment of the 1% consolidated cost of living staff pay award.</b></p>
12.	<p><b>Committee Reports to the Board</b></p>
12.1	<p>The Quality and Standards Committee report was received for information and assurance.</p>
12.2	<p>The Higher Education Committee report was received for information and assurance.</p>
12.3	<p>The Finance and General Purposes Committee report was received for information and assurance (with minutes circulated by email following the meeting).</p>
12.4	<p>The Audit Committee report was received for information and assurance (with minutes circulated by email following the meeting).</p>
12.5	<p>The Search and Governance Committee report was received for information and assurance.</p>
12.6	<p><b>RESOLVED: To approve the Governance Self-Assessment Report and Development Plan.</b></p>
13.	<p><b>Items for approval</b></p>
13.1	<p><b>RESOLVED: To approve the College Self-Assessment Report</b></p>

<b>13.2</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Remuneration Committee Annual Statement</b>
<b>13.3</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Reaseheath College Board Constitution</b>
<b>13.4</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Reaseheath College Board Governor Code of Conduct</b>
<b>13.5</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Reaseheath College Board Statement on Staff and Student Engagement</b>
<b>13.6</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Reaseheath College Board Statement on attendance at Board and Committee meetings</b>
<b>13.7</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Reaseheath College Board Conflicts of Interest Policy</b>
<b>13.8</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Reaseheath College Board Training and Development Policy</b>
<b>13.9</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To receive the Reaseheath College Board Cycle of Business</b>
<b>13.10</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To receive The Reaseheath College Board Forward Plan of Business</b>
<b>13.11</b>	<b>RESOLVED: To approve the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Any items for escalation to strategic risk register</b>
14.1	The meeting noted the increased level of risk on staff recruitment and retention for escalation to a red risk in the strategic risk register.
<b>15.</b>	<b>Date of next meetings</b>
15.1	The dates of the next meetings were confirmed as 27 January 2022 for the governor strategy day and 24 March 2022 for the Board meeting, with agreement that a Teams meeting will be needed in January to approve the annual accounts and to consider the requested approvals for capital projects.
<b>16.</b>	<b>Any other business (notified to chair/clerk in advance)</b>
16.1	There was no other business reported to the meeting. DP checked that all had ample opportunity to raise any matters they wished to raise, and this was confirmed.
<b>17.</b>	<b>Independent Governors Only</b>
	Confidential Part B item.

The meeting closed at 1.40pm

Confirmed as a correct record: 24 March 2022