



**MINUTES OF THE REIGATE LEARNING ALLIANCE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD
ON TUESDAY 01 JULY 2019**

Present: Mr Michael Jones - Chair
Ms Pat Frankland
Mr Stephen Hewes
Mr Richard Stephen
Mr Farouk Durrani
Ms Yvette Robbins
Mr Gerard Weide
Mr Chris Whelan - Chief Executive Officer
Mr Nick Clark - Principal

In attendance: Mr Jon Allen (Clerk)
Ms Kim Saw (Director of Finance)

1. WELCOME, NOTICE OF MEETING, & OFSTED TRAINING

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair stated that 14 days notice is required for all meetings of the Trust, with the papers to be made available 7 days in advance of the meeting. The notice for this meeting was 13 days. The Board gave its agreement for the short notice.

Trustees and Governors from the Local Governing Body attended a training session prior to the start of the Trust Board meeting on the new Ofsted 'Common Inspection Framework' that comes into operation from this September. Arising from the training was the following action point:

At the conclusion of all Trust meetings, for the meeting to ask the following questions:

- (i) Were there any training needs identified for Trustees?
- (ii) What, if any, contribution has the meeting made to improving provision?

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Spencer Bowen.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Michael Jones declared his interest in being a Member of the Trust.

4. MINUTES

The minutes and confidential minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 02 April 2019 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. SUMMARY ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING

The 'Summary Action List' (Paper 2) was received and the following updates were noted:

MIN	ACTION	UPDATE
13 - 4/12/18	To amend Risk 10 to remove reference to a Trustee being a member of the College's Health & Safety Committee	Completed
6(ii) - 2/4/19	It was AGREED to make available at the summer term meeting of the Trust Board a report on the revised Common Inspection Framework.	Training event was made available prior to the start of the July Board meeting
6(iii) - 2/4/19	It was AGREED to issue the final draft of the MoU with East Surrey College to Trustees for their comment and feedback. The aim is to have the revised MoU in place after Easter.	Agenda item at this meeting
7	To give assurances to Trustees on the safeguarding arrangements in the College, the following reporting framework is in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee with safeguarding responsibilities (Pat Frankland) to hold regular meetings with the College's safeguarding team and any issues arising to be reported to the Trust Board through the exceptional safeguarding agenda item at each trust Board meeting. Annual safeguarding report to be made available at the summer term Trust Board meeting after first being considered by the Local Governing Body; Mid year report on safeguarding to be made available to the Trust Board. In addition, Trustees to be invited to attend the staff safeguarding training sessions that will be run in the summer term. An on-line safeguarding training module is also being developed and the link to this training module to be made available to Trustees.	Actioned
12 - 2/4/19	To fully embed the reporting from the Committees, it was AGREED for the need for all report authors to use the coversheet template that has been designed to enable reporting on the Board Assurance Framework and the level of assurances.	Introduced
14 - 2/4/19	Trustees were asked to give consideration to starting future meetings at an earlier start time. It was AGREED for all Trust meetings to commence at 17.30 with immediate effect.	Revised start time of 17.30 implemented
14 - 2/4/19	It was AGREED to continue with the current practice of having a separate Trust Board meeting to deal with a single agenda item on the strategic direction of the Trust.	Actioned - Strategy meeting to be held 04 July 2019

6. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT

The report (Paper 3) was presented and discussed in detail at the last meeting of the Local Governing Body. As per the agreement on reporting to the Trust Board on safeguarding, the annual report is also made available to Trustees.

It was confirmed the report is in compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 and with Surrey County Council Safeguarding, which state that the Governing Body must undertake an annual review of its Policies and procedures and how these duties have been discharged. Such a review is also an integral part of the Reigate College Safeguarding Policy. It was **AGREED** that in addition to confirming compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, future reports to explicitly state that the College is meeting all statutory requirements for safeguarding and that all key safeguarding staff are appropriately trained.

The LGB meeting noted with concern that Surrey County Council again was rated by Ofsted as 'Inadequate' for Safeguarding. Despite this the College continues to work with the Council when referrals are made. However, this remains a risk area and the Clerk confirmed that safeguarding arrangements is a risk identified in the Trust's Risk Register.

It was noted and welcomed that Safeguarding team continues to work very closely with a dedicated Student Support Team, consisting of experienced and committed Pastoral Care Managers, a strong and comprehensive Study and Support team, and a highly utilised Counselling service. These areas of the College, coupled with a very effective administration team, provide seamless support for students.

The Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding reported that since the publication of the annual report, it has been agreed with the College's Safeguarding Officer to add to future reports year-on-year comparative data on the number of referrals and types of referrals made.

It was **SUGGESTED** that any evidence that is available from students to show that they feel safe should be made available in future annual reports.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

7. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - EAST SURREY COLLEGE

The final version of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was made available for the Trust Board to approve (Paper 4).

It was confirmed the MOU is a voluntary agreement that sets out the purpose and understanding between East Surrey College and Reigate College in relation to providing and promoting educational opportunities for young people within the areas in which they serve or seek to serve.

The overarching principles are:

- Choice
- Inclusion
- Quality

- Sustainable Growth

Trustees **REQUESTED** that the wording in the paragraph relating to the duration of the agreement be subject to further review, as the current wording is restrictive, with the agreement stating that if any one of the four signatories on the MOU leaves their respective College, then the MOU is not longer valid.

Subject to the proposed amendment on duration, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Reigate College and East Surrey College.

8. FINANCE

(i) Minutes

The minutes of the Finance Committee held 17 June 2019 were received and noted (Paper 5).

(ii) Management Accounts up to 30 April 2019

The Management Accounts up to 30 April 2019, previously circulated to Trustees and Members, were received and noted (Paper 6).

The year-end forecast is for a surplus before cash items of £226k against the budget of £109k, a positive variance of £117k.

It was reported that the Management Accounts up to 31 May 2019 had been issued this week to Trustees and Members.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Management Accounts.

(iii) College Budget 2019-20

The College Budget 2019-20 was received for approval following the review and recommendation from the Finance Committee for the Trust Board to approve the budget for 2019-20 (Paper 7).

The following headlines were noted:

ESFA INCOME	PAY	NON PAY COSTS
117 additional students	Increase of £820k (9%)	Increase of £181k (7%)
2,454 students in total	Budgeted pay award of 2%	Average inflation rate 2%
Programme funding of £11,299k Average funding per head £4,617 as against last years current funding of £4,569 per student	Increase of £366k in employer contributions to the Teachers Pension Scheme. Government has agreed to fund this increase but for 2019/20 only.	Capital projects: IT - Wifi upgrade - £80k Summer works - £190k

	19/20 Budget	18/19 Year-end Forecast
Surplus before non cash items	£410k	£226k
EBITDA (Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation)	3.20%	1.94%

As an academy, the College is no longer required by the ESFA to calculate a financial health grade. The only measure required is that an academy sets at a minimum a balanced budget for each financial year (although it can draw on unspent funds brought forward from previous years). The proposed budget 2019/20 forecasts a positive budget with a surplus of £410k before non cash items.

Cash flow forecasts for the 12 months remain healthy with a forecast cash generation of £400k. Cash balances are forecast to be £2,434m at year-end against the opening cash balance of £2,254m, a positive movement of £182k during the year.

It was noted the budget shows a considerable increase in administration and central service costs over the last 2 years. It was **AGREED** to make available to the Chair of the Finance Committee an explanation for the increase in these costs.

Trustees asked if the College was benchmarking its financial data against available financial data for the sector? It was **AGREED** that in future management accounts and budgets a table to be made available to show how the College is performing against sector financial benchmarks.

Following review, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the College Budget 2019-2020.

(iv) Spending Authorisations

The paper outlined the proposed changes for spending authorisations for the Trust Board to review and approve (Paper 9).

The Trust Board **AGREED** for the following changes to be made to the proposed spending authorisations:

- (a) If the Principal decides that only one quotation is justified, the reasons for the justification to be recorded in writing and made available for audit purposes:
- (b) To split the order value of >£1k and <£50k for preferred supplies with any order value of between £1k to £30k for either the CEO or Principal to authorise, and any order value between £30k up to £50k for both the CEO and Principal to authorise.

Subject to the inclusion of the agreed changes, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the spending authorisations.

(v) Discretionary Bursary Fund Policy for 2019/20

Following review, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Discretionary Bursary Fund & Policy for 2019/20 (Paper 10).

9. ADMISSIONS POLICY 2020-2021

The Admissions Policy 2020-2021 was received for review and approval (Paper 8).

It had been previously agreed by the Board to receive the Admissions Policy only if substantial changes to the policy had been made. It was reported that the policy presented is the first significant change for many years in the College's admission arrangements.

Section 3 of the policy outlined in detail the order to be followed, and against what criteria, for applications received on or before 01 November 2019.

Section 4 of the policy outlined the criteria that students must meet if they are to be offered a place.

The changes to the policy reflects the growth of new schools, allows for greater flexibility, and makes the application process more transparent. It was confirmed the Admissions Policy will be published on the College's website, with the various schools from Section 3 of the policy to be clearly stated on the website.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Admissions Policy 2020-2021.

It was further **AGREED** that in future the Admissions Policy to be a fixed annual agenda item for the Trust Board to approve, even if there has been no changes to the policy.

10. AUDIT

The minutes of the Audit Committee held 10 June 2019 were received (Paper 9) for information purposes. The meeting covered the following:

- Data Breach Policy
- Internal Audit Report - Cyber Security
- Peer Review of Outcome Data
- Scope of internal audit for 2019-20
- Audit plan for the Financial Statements year ended 31 August 2019
- Board Assurance Assessments
- Review of the performance of auditors

Also made available was the audit plan for the Financial Statements year ended 31 August 2019 that the Audit Committee recommends the Trust Board to approve (Paper 10).

The Principal of Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College, a member of the S7 GROUP, undertook a peer review on Reigate's achievement data. It was agreed to conduct such a review in order to seek some form of external validation and assurance on the data present to Trustees and Governors.

The review concluded with the following summary:

‘Although Ofsted do not publish any guidance as to what level of outcome data constitutes an ‘Outstanding’ grade, the data suggests a high level of assurance that Reigate College would achieve an Outstanding judgement for Outcomes for Learners’.

The Trust Board welcomed the outcomes of the peer assessment.

Following a further review of how committees and the Board report on board assurance, the Audit Committee agreed the following:

- All future Board and Committee reports should contain brief explanation of the purpose of the report, its link to Corporate Objective or BAF risk, along with reference to any legal or compliance regulations.
- The assessments should continue to be made at the end of each meeting, at which point a broader view of assurances and any newly emerging risks may be considered.

It was noted collective responsibility for the Board Assurance Framework (BAF) and Risk Register rests with the Trustees. The role of the Audit Committee is to conduct the detail review of the BAF and Risk Register, but these documents should also be made available at each meeting of the Trust Board. Such an approach would enable Trustees to discharge their responsibilities.

Following review of the minutes, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) To approve the audit plan for the Financial Statements year ended 31 August 2019;
- (ii) To amend the Risk Management Policy 2019-2020 to state that the BAF and Risk Register is to be made available at each meeting of the Trust Board; and
- (iii) To note the minutes.

11. LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

The minutes of the RLA Local Governing Body meeting held 04 June 2019 were received (Paper 13). The meeting covered the following;

- Careers Briefing
- Annual Safeguarding Report
- New Lesson Observation System
- Student Retention
- National Achievement Rates
- New Ofsted Common Inspection Framework
- Student Discussion Groups
- Staff Discussion Groups
- Self Assessment Development Plan
- Curriculum Offer 2020
- Student Input
- Board Assurance Assessments

The Board welcomed the continuing high student retention rate of 97.10%.

The Board welcomed the College's overall achievement rate of 97.1%. The College has always been a national leader for this type of measurement.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes

12. ANNUAL ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Clause 83 from the Articles states '*The Trustees shall each school year elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among their number. A Trustee who is employed by the Academy Trust shall not be eligible for election as chairman or vice-chairman*'.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Michael Jones to be the Chair for the academic year 2019-20 and to appoint Pat Frankland to be the Vice Chair for the academic year 2019-20

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The meeting schedule for 2019-20 was **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 19.20.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SUMMARY ACTION LIST

MIN	ACTION	REVIEW DATE
1	At the conclusion of all Trust meetings, for the meeting to ask the following questions: (iii) Were there any training needs identified for Trustees? (iv) What, if any, contribution has the meeting made to improving provision?	15/10/19
6	In addition to confirming compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, future Annual Safeguarding Reports to explicitly state that the College is meeting all statutory requirements for safeguarding and that all key safeguarding staff are appropriately trained.	15/10/19
7	MOU with East Surrey College: The wording in the paragraph relating to the duration of the agreement be subject to further review, as the current wording is restrictive, with the agreement stating that if any one of the four signatories on the MOU leaves, then	15/10/19

	the MOU is not longer valid.	
8(iii)	It was noted the budget shows a considerable increase in administration and central service costs over the last 2 years. It was AGREED to make available to the Chair of the Finance Committee an explanation for the increase in these costs.	15/10/19
8(iii)	In future management accounts and budgets a table to be made available to show how the College is performing against sector financial benchmarks.	15/10/19
8(iv)	The following changes to be made to the proposed spending authorisations: (a) If the Principal decides that only one quotation is justified, the reasons for the justification to be recorded in writing and made available for audit purposes: (b) To split the order value of >£1k and <£50k for preferred supplies with any order value of between £1k to £30k for either the CEO or Principal to authorise, and any order value between £30k up to £50k for both the CEO sand Principal to authorise.	15/10/19
9	The Admissions Policy to be an annual fixed agenda item for the Trust Board to approve, even if there has been no changes to the policy.	15/10/19
10(ii)	To amend the Risk Management Policy 2019-2020 to state that the BAF and Risk Register is to be made available at each meeting of the Trust Board	3/12/19