



**MINUTES OF THE REIGATE LEARNING ALLIANCE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD  
ON TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2022 @17.00**

**Present:** Ms Pat Frankland - Chair  
Ms Kate Fulker  
Mr Stephen Hewes  
Mr Farouk Durrani  
Ms Yvette Robbins  
Mr Gerard Weide  
Mr Chris Whelan - Chief Executive Officer  
Mr Nick Clark – Executive Principal

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

**SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

Prior to the start of the Board meeting, Trustees received from Mel Pearl safeguarding training on the recently updated publication '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' with specific reference to the safeguarding duties and responsibilities of the Board and Trustees.

It was noted, Mel Pearl, the College's designated lead on safeguarding, will keep a record of the training received. For the two Trustees not in attendance, it was agreed to circulate to them copies of the PowerPoint presentation. The PowerPoint presentation to be issued to Trustees in attendance.

To provide assurances to Trustees that they are meeting their statutory responsibilities on safeguarding, it was **AGREED** to include in the Board's Annual Safeguarding Report a summary on how the Board discharges its responsibilities, including how it meets its obligations with reference to legislation that now falls under the scope of safeguarding including the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked Mel Pearl for the training received.

**1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES & QUORACY**

Welcome was made to Ms Kate Fulker, the recently appointed Trustee and introductions were made.

Apologies were received from Mr Spencer Bowen and Mr Richard Stephen.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declared interests against any of the agenda items.

### 3. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 12 July 2022 (Paper 1).

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the confidential minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 12 July 2022 (Paper 7). Members of the Executive were not in attendance for this agenda item.

### 4. SUMMARY ACTION LIST

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

Min	ACTION	UPDATE
21/9/21 - 9	Review of Articles by the working group	It was confirmed a legal firm with speciality in this area (Browne Jacobson Lawyers) has been commissioned to advise the Trust.  When the work has been completed, the Trust Board will be asked to review the updated Articles and to approve sending the Articles to Members for formal adoption.
7/12/21 – 15(iii)	Documentation of the Trust's appetite to risk to be subject to review from the College's Internal Audit Service.  A framework on risk tolerance to be made available for the Board to review at its next meeting.	Documentation was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee.  Risk tolerance is now included in the proposed Risk Register 2022/23 – Agenda item.
14 – 23/2/22	Risk Register to be subject to further review following the approval of the Strategic Plan and outcomes arising from the work on defining the Trusts risk appetite/tolerance	Risk Register to be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee when it meets in November and will be an agenda item at the December Trust Board meeting.  The ' <i>Risk Management Policy 2022/23</i> ', a later agenda item, will require the Risk Register to be the first substantive agenda item at all Board meetings.

5-12/7/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) To make available page 4 from the Strategic Plan for publication on the College's Website;</li> <li>(ii) To conduct a SWOT analysis at the September Trust Board meeting; and</li> <li>(iii) To receive at the September Trust Board meeting the KPIs against which the Trust Board will monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Added to the website.</p> <p>Agenda item</p> <p>Agenda item</p>
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## 5 CEO UPDATES

### Outcomes:

As a result of Teacher Assessment Grades that were used instead of examinations during the Covid pandemic, the Executive expected some reduction in broad outcomes. However, there was no reduction from last year with another year of excellent results. Staff and students were very pleased with the outcomes.

The College continues to have an excellent 'Value Added' score and remains in the top 10% nationally for 'Value Added'.

The UCAS application cycle is not yet complete but thirty times as many students have obtained their first choice university. Approximately 900 students have been placed so far (although some of these may reject or defer their place) including 223 having been given places at one of the Russell Group universities, with 9 having gained a place at either Oxford or Cambridge.

More difficult to assess are vocational course outcomes which are normally very strong due to continuous assessment included from Teacher Assessment Grades last summer.

GCSE English and maths outcomes appear to be very good. English looks better than maths at first sight but possibly reflects much higher starting points.

It was noted the DfE will produce a limited performance table this year and hope to have a draft for reporting confidential internal reporting around late October / early November with publication in February / March 2023.

Trustees welcomed the positive reporting on outcomes. It was noted a full analysis of outcomes will be made available at the next meeting of the Local Governing Body and reported on in the College's Self-Assessment Report.

### Budget:

Main areas of concern are inflation, energy costs and pay costs. The budget was set with an expected inflation rate of 5% but current inflation is at 9.9%. Energy costs will be high but initial estimates from the supplier suggest the costs will be in line with budget. Pay costs were budgeted for a 5% increase but that now seems unlikely to be accepted by the Unions who are demanding 11%. Trustees were warned of the risk of

potential of industrial action. If industrial action takes place the expectation is that it would be a national strike, and not a localised strike which could damage the College's reputation within the local community.

*Trustees asked* what contingency plans were in place to mitigate against the impact of industrial action. In response it was confirmed it will be difficult to provide a robust contingency as staff who attend work during a period of industrial action would not provide cover for colleagues who were on strike. Neither would staff on industrial action set work for students to undertake. If the College cannot be run safely during a period of industrial action, then there would be no alternative but to close the College.

#### **Enrolment:**

As at today there are 2,900 students enrolled. The expectation is for this to be nearer to 2,830 by enumeration (1<sup>st</sup> November) which would be above the funding allocation of 2,820.

The additional teaching space this year means that the current number of students have been accommodated without problem and class sizes are slightly lower than last year with the average class size at 17. Eighty percent of classes have less than 20 students, with the maximum being 22 students.

*Trustees asked* what was the retention this year from lower sixth to upper sixth? It was reported there were very few dropouts from lower to upper sixth. Retention remains high across the College at circa 97% against a sector average of circa 91%.

## **6. STRATEGIC MATTERS**

#### **KPIs:**

The Chair confirmed she and the Vice Chair held a meeting at the start of term with the CEO and Executive Principal to finalise KPIs to be used for their respective appraisals. As the Remuneration Committee has been tasked with overseeing the drafting and approval of the KPIs, the Chair confirmed she would make them available to the other member of the Remuneration Committee for review. Once the review has been completed the KPIs will be signed off by the Remuneration Committee.

At the July Trust Board meeting the Strategic Plan 2022 for Reigate College was approved. The Plan listed 10 strategic aims, with each aim supported with a number of objectives. The Chair asked Trustees on how they wanted to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan. In discussion it was **AGREED** that it would be useful to have a couple of key KPIs for each of the 10 strategic aims that could then be reported on at Board meetings. To oversee the task of drafting KPIs, it was **AGREED** to use a working group (Pat Frankland, Yvette Robbins, Farouk Durrani and Kate Fulker) and for the Group to liaise with the Executive Principal on the outcomes of their work before the KPIs are put to the Board for approval.

#### **SWOT ANALYSIS:**

Made available was a 'SWOT Analysis' for Reigate College, covering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Paper 3). The analysis was presented by the Executive Principal who confirmed the analysis was an initial draft and he sought guidance from the Board on how Trustees wanted to use the SWOT analysis.

To progress this further it was **AGREED** to form a Working Group (Kate Fulker, Yvette Robbins and the Executive Principal) and all Trustees were invited to send any suggestions to either the Clerk or the Executive Principal. Outcomes of the work from this Working Group to be made available to the Board.

## **7. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS UP TO 31 JULY 2022**

Management Accounts for 11 months up to 31 July 2022 were received for information purposes (Paper 4). There were no issues of concern with performance being in line with the budget.

In terms of the year-end, the forecast is for the surplus to be ahead against the set budget due mainly to receipt of unexpected in-year extra funding of £0.5m from the funding body. A full review of the year-end position is to be undertaken at the November meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee.

The Management Accounts were noted.

## **8 AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE AND RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY 2022/23**

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held 08 September 2022 were received and noted (Paper 5).

The meeting was held to finalise the '*Risk Management Policy 2022/23*' to be put to the Board for approval (Paper 6). The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee outlined the key changes to the policy relating to the management of risk and these were noted as follows:

- Updating the section 'Approach to Risk Management' to be in line with 'Academies Trust Handbook' issued by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), the ESFA good practice guides 'Internal Scrutiny' and 'Academy Trust Risk Management' and the document 'The Orange Book' issued by the Government.
- The Risk Register to include a new 'Risk Management Data Dashboard' to compare risk scores quantified with reference to a new assessment of risk appetite or tolerance, to identify any specific risks requiring urgent attention and reporting on at Board meetings. The key reporting method to be via the CEO's termly report to the Trust Board with the report providing the Board with progress updates against those risks identified to be outside the acceptable levels.
- The Risk Register and risk mitigation action plan documentation have been merged to better support maintenance of a suitable dashboard and risk register.
- Introduce a 'very high' level to the risk scoring matrix to better differentiate the highest risks. Review frequency will no longer be driven by risk scores – instead all risks and mitigation actions are to be reviewed termly at Board meetings through presenting the Risk Register as a fixed agenda item, with CEO reporting in the CEO's report on any high or very high risks.
- New format for the Risk Register. Against each risk, the Risk Register to summarise the cause, effect, mitigation actions, level of tolerance, and governance of the risk. Gross scores and scores post mitigation to be included with confirmation if the risk is inside or outside the acceptable level.
- For each risk listed in the Risk Register there will be a statement on tolerance. In basic terms, the setting and definition of tolerance is what, as a Board, would be acceptable given that not everything goes to plan all of the time and the RLA operates in an imperfect environment. The purpose of documenting the risk tolerance is to provide clarity on the acceptable variability of adverse outcomes so that focus can be given to the risks that are really critical to the RLA.

- Tracking of the post mitigation score compared to the previous post mitigation score to be shown by arrows. Upward arrow to indicate when the post mitigation score has been increased; downward arrow to indicate when the post mitigation score has decreased. Equal sign to indicate no movement from the previous post-mitigation score.
- Risks in the Risk Register to be linked against the new strategic aims listed in the Strategic Plan 2022.
- The CEO to present agenda items on risk management including the Risk Register at all meetings of the Trust Board and Audit & Risk Committee.
- Structure of Board agendas – The Risk Register to be the first formal agenda item, followed by the CEO report which will be used to report on those risks identified to be outside of agreed tolerance limits. Meetings to conclude with reports on Board Assurance Assessments conducted at Board and Committee meetings and the Board to note any changes required to the Risk Register arising from the assessments

Trustees welcomed the significant improvements proposed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the management of risk and thanked both the Committee and Clerk for the work undertaken. Trustees particularly welcomed the change in focus with the Risk Register being the first substantive agenda item at Board meetings followed by the CEO report reporting on the high level risks.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the ‘*Risk Management Policy 2022/23*’.

The Clerk confirmed the next stage is for the CEO and Risk Champion to draft the Risk Register against the new criteria and the register to be made available at the next meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee and Board meeting. The CEO confirmed the Risk Champion has been tasked to lead on this work and this was welcomed by the Trustees.

## 9 **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

A revised ‘*Admissions Policy*’ (Paper 8) was made available for review and approval (Paper 8). Other than the addition of The Beacon School to be one of the seven partner schools, no material changes were proposed to the policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the ‘*Admissions Policy*’ and for the policy to be uploaded onto the College website.

## 10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Clerk confirmed he will soon issue to Trustees the questionnaire in preparation for the one-to-one meeting to be held between each Trustee and the Chair as part of the governance review framework.

## 11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Trust Board Meeting, Tuesday 06 December 2022 @17.30

The meeting closed at 19.10.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### SUMMARY ACTION LIST

MIN	ACTION	REVIEW DATE
Safeguarding Training	Annual Safeguarding Report	To provide assurances to Trustees that they are meeting their statutory responsibilities on safeguarding, it was <b>AGREED</b> to include in the Board's Annual Safeguarding Report a summary on how the Board discharges its responsibilities including how it meets its obligations with reference to legislation that now falls under the scope of safeguarding including the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act.
Minute 3-20/9/22	Review of Articles by the working group	When the work has been completed, the Trust Board will be asked to review the updated Articles and to approve sending the Articles to Members for formal adoption.
Minute 6 – 20/9/22	KPIs/Strategic Plan	it was <b>AGREED</b> that it would be useful to have a couple of key KPIs for each of the 10 strategic aims that could then be reported on at Board meetings. To oversee the task of drafting KPIs it was <b>AGREED</b> to use a working group (Pat Frankland, Yvette Robbins, Farouk Durrani and Kate Fulker) and for the Group to liaise with the Executive Principal on the outcomes of their work before the KPIs are put to the Board for approval.
Minute 6 – 20/9/22	SWOT Analysis	To progress this further it was <b>AGREED</b> to form a Working Group (Kate Fulker, Yvette Robins and the Executive Principal) and all Trustees were invited to send any suggestions to either the Clerk or the Executive Principal. Outcomes of the work from this Working Group to be made available to the Board.
Minute 8 – 20/9/22	Risk Register	The CEO and Risk Champion to draft the Risk Register against the new criteria and the register to be made available at the next meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee and Board meeting.