



**MINUTES OF THE REIGATE LEARNING ALLIANCE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD
ON TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER @17.30**

Present: Mr Michael Jones - Chair
 Mr Stephen Hewes
 Mr Richard Stephen
 Mr Farouk Durrani
 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)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Pat Frankland, Spencer Bowen and Yvette Robbins.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 29 June 2021 (Paper 1) were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. SUMMARY ACTION LIST

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

Min Ref	ACTION	UPDATE
23/3/21 - 18(i)	To approve KPIs for the Chief Executive and Executive Principal.	The Remuneration Committee is meeting on 30 September to finalise the KPI framework for the two senior post holders
23/3/21 - 7	(i) Trustees to be issued with a College email address	Despite assurances given, Trustees have still to be allocated a college email address. This to be followed up.

	(ii) College documents held by Trustees should be cleansed on a regular basis, and documents should not be retained unless necessary. The suggestion was to retain documents for no more than one year but guidance on this will be issued to Trustees.	The GDPR audit to be undertaken by the internal audit service to include guidelines on the retention of documents held by Trustees.
29/6/21 - 3	Committee and Trust Board minutes, once approved by the respective Chair, to be circulated to Trustees.	Actioned
29/6/21 – 8(i)	To hold a strategy meeting in the next academic year for Trustees to consider further the strategic direction of the Trust.	See minute below
29/6/21 – 8(v)	To restart Ofsted training for Trustees as soon as possible and will prepare a briefing about how the college has / is responding to the situation in terms of educational delivery.	See minute below
29/6/21 - 13	Changes to the scoring of some of the risks were proposed and it was AGREED to circulate the proposed changes to the Audit Committee for further consideration.	Actioned.
Request by Chair of Audit	Gender Pay Report – to receive for review	Agenda item

Strategy Meeting:

It was agreed for the Executive to start work on the Strategic Plan for the Trust Board to review a first draft at the March meeting and to give final approval at the June meeting. To assist in the process, it was agreed to form a working group consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair, Chair of Audit and Spencer Bowen. The members of the working group to meet in October to prepare for the Executive a summary of what they would want to see in the Strategic Plan, then meet with the Executive as required.

Ofsted Training:

The CEO confirmed he will be attending an Ofsted briefing meeting this week with the expectation that the College will be subject to an inspection during the current academic year.

In terms of trustee involvement, Ofsted will want to hold a meeting with a number of trustees, and the CEO suggested this should be the Chair and Vice Chair. To brief the Chair and Vice Chair it was proposed to hold a briefing meeting with the CEO prior to half term.

For other Trustees, the CEO will make available several briefing documents related to the Ofsted inspection framework.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

The report from the Chief Executive Officer was received (Paper 3). The report provided Trustees with updates on:

- Student Outcomes 2020-21

- Appeals
- Enrolment
- Finance
- Covid
- Ofsted
- Other news.

In terms of student outcomes, due to no examinations being held because of Covid-19 pandemic, there again will be limited useful data available this year, and there will be no DfE performance tables again. The following data was presented to the Trust Board:

A levels:

- 67.4% A* - B and 99.9% A* - E
- Value added among Sixth Form Colleges somewhere in top 25%

BTEC

- 100% pass rate and 78.9% high grades for 'double' sized vocational qualifications
- 99.9% pass rate and 67.8% high grades for the main 'single' sized vocational qualifications

GCSE English and Maths

- English 92.3% grade 4 or above
- Maths 77.6% grade 4 or above

Level 2 (1 GCSE equivalent) vocational qualifications

- 100% pass rate and 68.1% high grades

There were approximately 50 appeals against results (mainly A Levels) representing about 1% of entries. One appeal was upheld.

Provisional student destination data was reported as follows:

- 85.1% of students have a place at their firm choice university
- 88.7% of students placed at their firm or insurance choice university
- 26.7% of those are at Russell Group universities (21.1% last year)
- 34% of those are at Sutton 30 universities, these are Russell Group plus other competitive universities such as Bath, Surrey, St Andrews etc (32.9% last year)
- 10 of those are at Oxbridge (3 last year)
- 9 for Medicine (8 last year)
- 3 for Vet Science (1 last year)

On enrolment, the decision was made to offer an additional 100 places for the current academic year to mitigate against any risks of reduced enrolments arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. There was a concern that students who had applied to join the College may decide to stay on at school due to the uncertainties arising from the pandemic. However, this was not the case, with those offered a place taking up the offer.

As of today, 2,875 enrolled students are enrolled, of which 1,500 are new students, an increase of 200 compared against the previous year. The expectation was for

approximately 100 students to withdraw before the November enumeration date but to date only 8 students have withdrawn.

The increase in student numbers will result in additional income for 2022-23 due to lagged funding.

Trustees asked if the College could accommodate the increase in student numbers. In response it was reported all subject choices have been confirmed and all students have their chosen subject options. Class sizes on average are between 18-19, compared with 17 last year. However, all classes can accommodate up to 20 students. No additional resources are required to meet the increase in student numbers. Social space in the College is being managed, assisted by two new marquees and changes made to the timetable to limit student movement. This has been done through more use of double periods.

The Executive were clear that this must not be viewed as the new norm in terms of increased student numbers. This was a one off exception due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and of the uncertainties arising.

In terms of student enrolments, it was asked whether the Executive will do anything different to “normal” enrolment process? Were there things they have learnt from having to do things differently that they can or will use going forward to make the process more efficient?

In response it was reported that in addition to the three planned open evenings that will be face to face, there will also be an open evening held virtually, as this proved to be successful when introduced when the College had to close. Saturdays had to be used for the first time for enrolling and this will again be repeated. For this academic year the enrolment process went paperless, and all applications next year will again be on-line.

6. ANNUAL HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

The ‘Annual Health & Safety Report 2020-21’ was received (Paper 4).

The total number of accidents was 105. The split out of this was 5 members of staff and 100 students. As a result of the College closure due to the national lockdown and the reduction in the number of sporting activities taking place due to Covid-19, the total number of accidents for this year is not considered representative and therefore, does not provide any meaningful comparative analysis against previous years.

Data for the last five years was reported as follows:

Year	Number of Incidents	Staff	Students
20/21	105	5	100
19/20	160	12	148
18/19	131	7	124
17/18	241	24	217
16/17	143	19	124

The most common location for accidents was the Sports Centre, which is to be expected due to the nature of the activities that take place in that venue.

Trustees asked as most accidents are happening in the sports hall, what preventative measures are in place to increase awareness of risk of accidents and how to avoid? In response it was reported that there are sufficient preventive measures in place but because of the nature of the activities that take place in the sports hall it is difficult to minimise accidents. Staff are vigilant when supervising sporting activities and undertake risk assessments. Staff ensure students are made aware of their own responsibilities when it comes to due care and attention when undertaking sporting activities.

It was confirmed as there were no serious issues arising from the annual review there would be no changes made to the College's health & safety processes.

The annual report was noted.

7. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS UP TO 31 JULY 2021

Management Accounts up to 31 July 2021 were received for information purposes (Paper 5)

A full review of the year-end position is to be undertaken at the November meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee.

Cash outflow of £175k per month for 11 months commencing August 2021 has been included in respect of the Refectory building project. A total of £2m grant funding was awarded from the Capital Improvement Fund with the remaining £1.3m of the building costs to be financed from College reserves. The cash flows shown in the Management Accounts were illustrative purposes only as the project cash flow schedule has not yet been finalised.

A question was asked on why the increase in depreciation? In response it was reported the budget is based on assets held at the time the budget was drafted and it can only be a best estimate. As more assets are acquired in year, such as the purchase of additional IT equipment to support students during the pandemic, this impacted on the depreciation figure.

The Management Accounts were noted.

8. GENDER PAY REPORT 2020-21

The 'Gender Pay Report 2020-21' was received for review (Paper 6).

It is a statutory requirement for the College to conduct an annual gender pay report following the criteria laid down by the Gender Pay Group Service.

The gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the mean or median hourly rate of pay that male and female employees receive. The mean pay gap is the difference between average hourly earnings of men and women. The median pay gap is the difference between the midpoints in the ranges of hourly earnings of male and female employees.

The figures in the report are based on the hourly rates of pay for staff as at 31 March 2020 (the 'snapshot' date set by the Gender Pay Group Service) and relates to 'full-pay relevant employees,' which means all employees who were earning their normal rate of pay in the period in which the 'snapshot' date fell. Anyone who had unpaid leave

or reduced pay due to maternity or paternity leave etc. had to be excluded from the data as per the criteria set by the Gender Pay Group Service.

The hourly rate of pay for staff includes basic pay, area allowance and responsibility payments before tax and pension deductions, but after salary sacrifice (childcare vouchers and cycle to work schemes). Overtime pay was not included.

The Reigate Learning Alliance operates three different contracts: teaching, support staff and catering, including casual staff. However, for the purpose of the gender pay gap report, the College used the same multiplier of 36.42 hours per week for all staff.

Trustees noted there were several caveats in the report such that it made the data too unreliable to use to reach meaningful conclusions. It was suggested to run the data with all staff including those on maternity or off sick, as this would be more revealing and give a more accurate position on gender pay. Due to the limitation on the data allowed to be used as set by the Gender Pay Group Service, Trustees were not assured that they know the actual gap because of the focus on the year's chronology, without having a base representing the norm.

Trustees asked if the Executive are aware on how the figures for Reigate College compare to the other 6th form colleges in the area? The CEO replied that a College must have 250 or more employees to participate in the survey, so this restricts the number of 6th form colleges where data is available.

The report was noted.

9. REVISED ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION FOR ACADEMY TRUSTS

Made available were the revised Articles of Association for Academy Trusts dated June 2021 (Paper 7). As it was unclear if the revised Articles must be adopted in full, or if it was possible to 'cherry pick' from the revised Articles, it was agreed to defer this agenda item to a later meeting.

Once clarification has been obtained on the status of the revised Articles, it was agreed for a working group be formed to undertake a comparison of the Trust's current Articles against the revised Articles. The working group to be Michael Jones and Farouk Durrani.

10. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee held 07 September 2021 were received (Paper 8) for information purposes. The meeting discussed and agreed the Internal Audit Plan 2021/22.

The meeting was also used to hold a discussion on the quantifying of risks and whether there was the need to define the Trusts appetite for risk. The Internal Auditor in attendance stated they could not advise on quantification of risks but suggested a better approach would be for the Trust to define their appetite for risk as this would help to mitigate and assess categories of risks. There is no right or wrong approach to defining a 'Risk Appetite' but, having a definition, would be useful when conducting a review of the Risk Register. The meeting agreed for the Internal Auditor to work with the Executive on developing a definition for 'Risk appetite' for further consideration by the Audit & Risk Committee and ultimately Trust Board approval.

The question was asked is there a need for a 'risk appetite' as it could be asked in what areas are risks worthwhile? The consensus view was that there is invariably a level of risk for all activities and therefore it is not possible to avoid risks. The key is to mitigate against risks and defining an appetite for risk would help to mitigate and assess the categories of risks.

The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee held 07 September 2021 were noted.

11. BOARD ASSURANCE

The Board agreed the following board assurance assessments for agenda items/reports considered at this meeting (Paper 9)

Agenda item number	Subject	RAG Rating	Any Committee Recommendation(s)
5	Executive Report	GREEN	
6	Annual H&S Report	GREEN	
7	Management Accounts	GREEN	
8	Gender Pay Report	AMBER	
9	Revised Articles of Association	N/A	Deferred
10	Audit & Risk Committee	GREEN	

.12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

.13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 07 December 2021 @17.30

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SUMMARY ACTION LIST

MIN	ACTION	REVIEW DATE
4	It was agreed for the Executive to start work on the Strategic Plan for the Trust Board to review a first draft at the March meeting and to give final approval at the June meeting. To assist in the process, it was agreed to form a working group consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair, Chair of Audit and Spencer Bowen. The members of the working group to meet in October to prepare for the Executive a summary of what they would want to see in the Strategic Plan, then meet with the Executive as required.	7/12/21
4	CEO to brief the Chair and Vice Chair to prepare them for the expected Ofsted inspection	7/12/21

4	CEO to make available several briefing documents related to the Ofsted inspection framework.	7/12/21
9.	Once clarification has been obtained on the status of the revised Articles, it was agreed for a working group be formed to undertake a comparison of the Trust's current Articles against the revised Articles. The working group to be Michael Jones and Farouk Durrani.	7/12/21