



**MINUTES OF THE REIGATE LEARNING ALLIANCE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD
ON TUESDAY 06 DECEMBER 2022 @17.30**

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

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

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Spencer Bowen.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was no declaration of interests against any of the agenda items.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the Trust Board meeting held 20 September 2022 (Paper 1) were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting

5. SUMMARY ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING

The '*Summary Action List*' (Paper 2) provided the meeting with the following progress updates against action points agreed at the last Board meeting:

MIN	ACTION	UPDATE
Safeguarding Training	To include in the Board's Annual Safeguarding Report a summary on how the Board discharges its statutory & regularity responsibilities.	To be included in the Annual Report – the 2022/23 Report to be an agenda item at the Summer Trust Board meeting.
Minute 3-20/9/22	Working Group - Review of Articles	The AGM scheduled for 17 January 2023 to be used for both the Board and Members to approve the Articles
Minute 6 – 20/9/22	KPIs/Strategic Plan – Working Group	Agenda item
Minute 6 – 20/9/22	SWOT Analysis – Working Group	Agenda item

Minute 8 – 20/9/22	Risk Register	Agenda item
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There were no other matters arising.

6. SAFEGUARDING/PREVENT EXCEPTIONAL REPORTING

The Executive Principal made available the following key updates for this term:

- 14 new referrals to children services
- 6 referrals to catch 22 (Drug use support)
- Emerging issues include:
 - Drug usage increasing with possible dealing on site. The College is working with the police on this matter.
 - Concerns around gangs operating outside of the College – county lines in Redhill.
 - Parental substance and alcohol misuse
 - Domestic abuse
 - Mental health

The update was noted.

7. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 24 NOVEMBER 2022

It was **RESOLVED** for this agenda item to be declared confidential for commercially sensitive reasons and for the minutes to be recorded separately as confidential and not for publication in the public domain.

8. RISK REGISTER 2022/23

The '*Risk Register 2022/23*' was received (Paper 3).

The Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting in September requested for changes to be made to the Risk Register and it was confirmed the changes were incorporated into the *Risk 'Register 2022/23'*.

Three risks were confirmed as outside of tolerance and the following updated from the CEO was noted against each of the three risks:

Risk 4	Failure to recruit, manage and retain high performing staff – both teaching and support – resulting in poor outcomes.	Outside – CEO Update: The shortage of people applying to PGCE courses remains a problem and there is no sign of this improving. For 2021-2022 the number of new entrants to teacher training was 82% of the target. The quality of applicants has also declined. The College continues to invest in its own teacher training programme and to pay slightly higher than the national average for SFCs.
Risk 7	Failure to produce and implement a strategic plan that effectively addresses the range of	Outside – CEO Update: This will remain 'Outside' until the KPIs and SWOT for the Reigate College Strategic Plan are finalised. In addition, the strategic direction of the

	changing external challenges	RLA will be subject to discussion at the Annual General Meeting for Members and Trustees scheduled for 17 January 2023.
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Risk 18	Failure to make appropriate changes to EHCP reviews for High Needs students (follows Ofsted inspection 03.22)	Outside – CEO Update: The college has been visited by the link governor and has reported back on progress to the LGB. The College is still waiting for an Ofsted monitoring visit and are confident that all reviews have either taken place within the specified time or are scheduled to do so.
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During discussions the request was made for data, whether positive or negative, to be made available to show if mitigation actions for those risks outside of tolerance are having any impact. In particular, on risk 4, and the failure to recruit and retain high performing staff, making available data on current vacancies compared against previous years would be a source of assurance for Trustees. In reply it was noted a commentary on teaching vacancies would be more appropriate in the summer term as the deadline date for any teacher resignation has to be notified by 31 May. As at today it was confirmed there are no current teacher vacancies. This was due to ‘creative solutions’ to provide adequate cover in those areas where there were vacancies.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the ‘*Risk Register 2022/23*’.

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER UPDATE

The following key points were noted from the report by the CEO (Paper 4):

New Secretary of State and educational views of the new Prime Minister:

Gilliam Keegan – previously a junior minister at education is the ninth Education Secretary in the last six years. Previously known to be an enthusiast for T levels but unenthusiastic about BTECs, but no policy announcements so far. The PM is thought to favour a wholesale reform of 16-19 education into a Baccalaureate type qualification, but this is not seen as a high priority for the government.

DfE Reform of vocational education:

The DfE have now dropped the idea of publishing a list of ‘saved’ vocational subjects and moved to a new round of reform for exam boards wishing to run vocational qualifications using new criteria which is yet to be published. The new qualifications list will now be published in July 2024.

Three-year financial mode:

The College was required to submit a three-year financial model to the ESFA. It was previously agreed to make no assumptions of increased per learner funding and that there would be an allowance for inflation. This produced a deficit and the loss of reserves by year 3. This attracted the attention of the ESFA and a meeting was arranged to discuss the matter further. The ESFA appeared to be completely satisfied that the ‘problem’ is the product of their policy of providing an annual update on per learner funding.

Arrangements for Summer 2023 exams:

Intention is that grading returns to 2019 standards with a provision that the DfE may change this if necessary. The main concern is how this will impact students at the

weaker end of the ability range – these students had been awarded GCSE grades which may have been inflated and resulted in students qualifying for courses that they might not normally have been able to take.

The College has been notified of the requirement to have in place plans for summer examinations in the case of another Covid outbreak. In such a scenario, the College will revert to its plans used during previous periods of lockdown.

Funding:

For this year sixth forms have been funded for additional time. This is mainly used with the U6 classes and, so far, this seems to be going extremely well.

No concrete news but the funding for the additional hours appears to be safe at the moment. There have been indications of more information about funding 'in December'.

The College has been notified of a grant of £117,000 for initiatives to obtain more energy efficient savings. To follow will be details of what the grant can be used for and timescales.

Enrolment and enumerated numbers:

The final enumerated numbers for 2022/23 will fall between 2,851 to 2,861, an increase on last year that will result in additional income for 2023/24. The expectation is to enumerate at a similar level for 2023. It was reported the College is in receipt of the most applications received at this point in the year compared against previous years.

Covid:

Student and staff absence levels remain low and are manageable There is no longer daily DfE reporting requirements.

10. **WORKING GROUPS PROGRESS UPDATES**

A progress update from the Working Group tasked to undertake further work on KPIs for the monitoring of the Strategic Plan for Reigate College was received (Paper 5). The report summarised proposed KPIs against each of the strategic aims for Reigate College that were approved by the Board at its meeting last July.

The following points were noted:

- Some of the KPI's need to be understood as qualitative
- Some of the data driven points need to settle post covid to understand appropriate thresholds
- Some of the measures might not be available and some might change in measurement from year to year as the DfE changes their own approach
- Some data points might have such small numbers that they are not reliable
- Targets to be subject to annual review
- Reporting schedule/timetable to Trust Board meetings to be agreed

Following review, it was **RESOLVED** to note the draft and for the final version, including a reporting schedule/timetable to Trust Board meetings, to be made available at the spring Trust Board meeting.

A progress update from the Working Group tasked to undertake further work on the SWOT analysis for Reigate College was received (Paper 6).

The Working Group agreed to identify the strengths that are unique to Reigate College that gives the College a competitive advantage against local schools, as there is no other Sixth Form College in the area to be compared against. Some strengths will be 'critical' – i.e., achievement data. The data may not be unique to just Reigate College, as other local providers may have similar achievement data, but the data is critical for our success.

The Working Group agreed to rank strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in terms of importance.

During discussion it was noted that what the organisation thinks are their strongest strengths can be very different to those viewed by customers (students and, indirectly, their parents/guardians) and partners (staff, local business). For example, Trustees may view financial viability as the key priority in the ranking of strengths. However, from parents' and students' perspective, they may think financial viability is assumed.

Therefore, should the strengths be in the order on how customers would view them – i.e., those strengths viewed as important to students' needs?

Trustees welcomed the work undertaken on the SWOT analysis and it was agreed the outcomes of the analysis would help to inform strategic discussions.

11. DRAFT COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2021/22

The draft '*College Self-Assessment Report 2021/21*' was received (Paper 7).

In keeping with the 'judgements' framework used by OFSTED to report on the work of colleges, Reigate College continued to use a similar approach to provide a graded assessment, with each area having a grade and annual targets.

The College's focus on student success includes an emphasis on comparison analysis for the college as a whole and all courses against national retention and achievement data, assessing value added performance and examining raw outcomes.

The process also looks at areas such as lesson observation reports, staff and student opinions, the breadth of curriculum provision, destination data, equality and diversity data as well as the broader experience of students in areas such as enrichment and work experience.

The self-assessment process is intended to be an honest and open analysis of the strengths of the College and areas that are in need of further attention. Although reporting annually, the process is, essentially, continual as there is a process of implementing improvements and monitoring progress towards the completion of the required improvements that takes place throughout the year.

The College's teaching departments, and student facing support departments, all prepare Self Assessment Reports (SAR) and action plans which are agreed with SLT and monitored during the year. Each course SAR is stored on a database to allow simplified updates and monitoring in-year and between years. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) evaluated the reports and prepared an analysis of the effectiveness of the College as a whole awarding grades on a similar basis to Ofsted. Individual courses and staff are not graded.

As the College was inspected in 2022 the proposed grades are the grades awarded by Ofsted:

- Overall effectiveness - Good

- The quality of education - Good
- Behaviour and attitudes - Outstanding
- Personal development - Good
- Leadership and management - Good
- Education programmes for young people - Good
- Provision for learners with high needs - Requires Improvement

The Local Governing Body for Reigate College (LGB) is responsible for scrutinising the self-assessment report and overseeing the actions being taken to improve, where necessary.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the draft of the '*Self-Assessment Report 2021/22*'.

12. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE 2021/22

The Board has agreed a framework for the review of governance covering a three year cycle. For 2020/21, the agreed framework for the review of governance comprised of the following elements:

- Review of current performance against a number of governance KPIs
- Skills analysis audit conducted on current governors
- Chair/Clerk to hold one-to-one review meetings with each Trustee
- Succession planning
- Action planning arising from the review.

The report, prepared by the Clerk, was received (Paper 8). Arising from the review were several recommendations and a progress update was made available on the recommendations made.

It was **RESOLVED** to form a Working Group to oversee the implementation of the various recommendations and for the Working Group to report on progress at each Board meeting. Membership of the Working Group to be the Chair, Farouk Durrani, the CEO, the Executive Principal, and the Clerk.

The Clerk thanked the Trustees and the Chair for their participation in the review.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Review of Governance Report 2021/22.

13. REPORT FROM THE REIGATE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

The minutes from the Reigate Local Governing Body meeting held 18 October 2022 were received for information purposes (Paper 9). The substantive agenda items for the meeting were as follows:

- Admissions And Numbers On Roll & Marketing Strategies
- Draft Outcome Data 2021/22
- Reigate College Self-Assessment Report & Development Plan - Draft
- Student Voice
- Board assurance assessments

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

14. OCTOBER MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

The October Management Accounts were received for information purposes (Paper 10). As October was very early in the financial year, there were no key issues arising on performance against the budget, and the following headline points were noted:

	October 2022 actual Surplus / (deficit) £000	Year to date actual Surplus / (deficit) £000	Year to date Budget Surplus / (deficit) £000
Before non-cash items	(67)	(131)	(366)
Retained surplus /(deficit)	(67)	(131)	(366)
	Balance at 31.10.22 £000	Balance at 30.09.22 £000	Balance at 31.08.22 £000
Bank & cash	4,423	4,180	4,041
Net assets	19,994	20,061	20,125

It was noted the budget assumed a 5% pay award for staff but the outcome on pay negotiations is still unknown. The budget assumed a 7% increase in energy costs and indications from the suppliers are that the final increase will be in line with the forecast.

An update was received on the industrial action from the teaching staff that took place for one day last week. Future industrial action is expected but no dates have yet been confirmed.

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

15. REPORT FROM THE FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held 08 November 2022 were received for information purposes (Paper 11).

The two substantive agenda items considered by the Committee were the review of the Management Accounts and Financial Statements 2021/22 both agenda items at this meeting.

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

16. REPORT FROM THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

The '*Minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee held 15 November 2022*' were received (Paper 12). In addition to the unconfirmed minutes, the Trust Board received the following:

- Audit & Risk Committee's Annual Report 2021/22 (Paper 13)
- Internal Audit Annual Report 2020/21 (Appendix I to Paper 13)
- Financial Statement & Regularity Audit Findings Report from the external auditors (Appendix II to Paper 13)
- Three Letters of Representation (covering the audit of financial statements, regularity audit and accounts return) issued by RSM (Appendix III to Paper 13)
- Financial Statements Year Ended 31 August 2022 (Paper 14)

The Audit & Risk Committee is responsible for providing an annual opinion to the Trust Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's assurance framework. The Audit & Risk Committee, in forming an annual opinion in their annual report, considered the audit opinions from the internal auditor and the financial statement and regularity auditor for Reigate Learning Alliance, and these were attached to the Annual Report from the Audit & Risk Committee. The Audit & Risk Committee also took into account the assurance assessments conducted by the Trust committees as part of the Board Assurance Framework.

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

- (i) To receive and approve the Annual Report 2021/22 from the Audit & Risk Committee and to note the following annual opinion agreed by the Committee:

The Audit & Risk Committee, through review of auditors' reports and discussion with auditors and college managers, has arrived at the opinion that Reigate Learning Alliance had adequate and effective assurance frameworks, framework of governance, risk management and control processes for the effective use of resources, solvency of the institution and the safeguarding of its assets.

The Audit & Risk Committee recommends the Trust Board approves the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the period ended 31 August 2022 for Reigate Learning Alliance and to authorise the Chief Accounting officer/Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Trust Board to sign the Financial Statements.

- (ii) To forward a copy of the 'Audit & Risk Committee's Annual Report 2021/22' to the ESFA;
- (iii) To authorise the Chair to sign on behalf of the Corporation the three 'Letters of Representation', issued by the External Auditor;
- (iv) To approve the 'Financial Statements for the year-ended 31 August 2022' and to authorise the Chair and Chief Executive Officer (Accounting Officer) to sign the accounts before submission to the ESFA; and
- (v) To note the minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held 15 November 2022.

17. BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

- (i) Termly report on assurance assessments conducted by Committees

The termly report on assurance assessments conducted by Committees for this term was received (Paper 15), as required by the agreed Board Assurance Framework.

The following assurance assessments were **NOTED**:

Local Governing Body meeting 18 October 2022

Agenda Item	Subject	RAG rating	Any Committee Recommendation(s)
7	Admissions & Numbers	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations

8	Draft Outcome Data	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
9	SENDCO Progress Update	AMBER	Ofsted monitoring visit, when it takes place, will confirm if areas of concern identified at the inspection have been addressed to the satisfaction of Ofsted.
10	SAR & Development Plan	AMBER	Still work in progress – final version to be approved at the December Trust Board meeting
11	Student Voice	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
12	Staff Voice	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations

Finance & Resources Committee meeting 08 November 2022

Agenda Item	Subject	RAG rating	Any Committee Recommendation(s)
7	Management Accounts	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
8	Financial Statement Year Ended 31 August 2022	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
8	Reconciliation Statement	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
8	Financial Statement Auditor's 'Audit Findings Report'	AMBER	Need for RSM to confirm in their final report that they have a level of comfort on the assumptions made in the Actuarial Report on the College liability in the Surrey Local Government pension scheme. <i>This has since been addressed with the final report confirming the external auditor has a level of comfort on the assumptions made in the Actuarial Report.</i>
9	Review of Contracts	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations

Audit & Risk Committee meeting 15 November 2022

Agenda item	Subject	RAG Rating	Any Committee Recommendation(s)
6	Audit Progress Update	GREEN	No concerns
7(i)	Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2022	GREEN	No issues of concern and the Committee welcomed the level of assurances received from the financial auditor
7(ii)	Audit Findings Report issued by RSM	GREEN	No issue of concern and the Committee welcomed the level of assurances received from the financial auditor
7(iii)	Letters of Representation	N/a	Letters are for benefit of external auditor
8	Risk Register 2022/23	GREEN	No issues of concern
9	BAF Assessments conducted by Committees	GREEN	No issues of concern.

(ii) Trust Board BAF Assessments agreed for reports/agenda items considered at this meeting:

The Trust Board agreed the following BAF assessments on the reports and agenda items considered at this meeting:

Subject	RAG Rating	Any Committee Recommendation(s)
Safeguarding/ Prevent Exceptional Reporting	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
Car Park Extension	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
Risk Register 2022/23		
Chief Executive Report	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
KPI Working Group	AMBER	Still work in progress
SWOT Working Group	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
Draft Self-Assessment Report	GREEN	Still in draft and will be subject to continuous review and updating
Review of Governance	AMBER	Work in progress – completion of action points arising from the review
October Management Accounts	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
Annual Report 2021/22 from the Audit & Risk Committee including appendices	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
Financial Statements Year Ended 31 August 2022	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations
BAF Assessments conducted by Committees since the last Trust Board meeting	GREEN	No concerns/no recommendations

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Trustees who attended the recent INSET sessions on a range of education and training topics commented on how much they appreciated and welcomed the invitation to attend. It was confirmed invites will again be issued for the next INSET session along with general invites to attend various student performances and award ceremonies.

Trustees thanked the two members of staff for their presentation on examination and BTEC assessments that was made available prior to the start of the Trust Board meeting. It was confirmed presentations on other teaching and learning topics will be arranged prior to the start of the Spring and Summer term Board meetings.

The Clerk confirmed the training undertaken by Trustees will be logged on the training log maintained by the Clerk.

Trustees received an update on the process followed for the recent student appeal against expulsion that was heard by three trustees. It was confirmed the procedure covering the appeal will be subject to further review with a revised policy subject to approval from the appropriate committee (Local Governing Body).

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee informed the meeting that the Committee has requested a list of policies be made available that require Trustee approval, with review dates confirmed. The focus will be on those policies that either have Trustee involvement, such as the hearing of appeals, or that include statutory/regulatory duties and responsibilities of Trustees, such as the Safeguarding Policy.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

- (i) Annual General Meeting – Members & Trustees - Tuesday 17 January 2023 @ 17.30
- (ii) Trust Board Meeting - Tuesday 21 March 2023 @ 17.30

The meeting closed at 19.10.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SUMMARY ACTION LIST

Min	ACTION	WHO
Safeguarding Training	To include in the Board’s Annual Safeguarding Report a summary on how the Board discharges its statutory & regulatory responsibilities.	To be included in the Annual Report – the 2022/23 Report to be an agenda item at the Summer Trust Board meeting.
5	The AGM scheduled for 17 January 2023 to be used for both the Board and Members to approve the Articles	21/3/23
8	Risk Register: Data, whether positive or negative, to be made available to show if mitigation actions for those risks outside of tolerance are having any impact	21/3/23
10	KPIs: final version, including a reporting schedule/timetable to Trust Board meetings, to be made available at the spring Trust Board meeting.	21/3/23
12	Review of Governance Recommendations: Working Group to report on progress at each Board meeting. Membership of the Working Group to be the Chair, Farouk Durrani, the CEO, the Executive Principal, and the Clerk.	21/3/23
18	Student appeals - the procedure covering student appeals to be subject to further review with a revised policy being subject to approval from the appropriate committee (LGB)	21/3/23