

**RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 5.30pm**  
**In M5 Maple building, Richard Huish College**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**           **College Governing Body Members:**  
Dave Tomaney (Vice Chair) - DT  
Anna Gabriel - AG  
Mark Deakin - MD  
Ian Brown – IB  
Nic Blunsum – NB  
Gemma Lyons - GL  
Lucy Halley (Student Governor) - LH  
Jasmine Fowler (Student Governor) - JF

**In attendance:**

Richard Hatcher - RH  
David Snell - DS  
Johanna Marks – JM

**Senior Leadership Team:**

Becky Flower – Vice Principal: Student Support  
Laurie Morgan – Director of Quality  
Joe Bennett – Assistant Principal (School of Business and Creative Industries)

**Clerk:**

Hannah Clunie

**Apologies:**       Barbara Barratt (Chair)  
Emma Fielding (Principal)  
Matt Morgan (Sabbatical until July 2023)

Items marked with \* had a paper previously circulated.  
Item marked with + was a verbal update or presentation.

**SECTION 1 – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS**

**1.1 Welcome and apologies**

The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed the College Governing Body that he would be overseeing today's meeting in Barbara's absence. Apologies received from; Barbara Barratt (Chair), Emma Fielding (Principal) and Matt Morgan. David Snell, Johanna Marks and Richard Hatcher were attending as observers.

**1.2 Declarations of interest – business and pecuniary**

There were no declarations of interest made in connection to items on the agenda.

**1.3 Minutes of previous meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023\***

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

**1.4 Matters arising report\***

Matters arising were on the agenda or scheduled for later meetings.

## SECTION 2 – STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Principal's update+

Led by Becky Flower (Vice Principal of Student Support) in the principal's absence. Governors noted the reports.

- There had been two further days of industrial action which took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May. The National Education Union (NEU) gave exemptions for members who wished to continue to teach exam classes. There was currently a national re-ballot for further possible action later in the year.
- Staff had been recruited in; Graphics, Law, Biology and Criminology. 3 full time progress tutors had also been appointed with a fourth position being advertised. Management Information Systems (MIS) had recruited a new administrator in April. Interviews were due to take place at the end of May for a Geology teacher.
- There continued to be a national shortage of invigilators, a rolling advert was in place to try and fill these roles.  
Q: Do you feel staff turnover is currently high and has there been any challenges filling vacancies?  
A: Although there has been a number of staff changes it is not concerning, especially when you factor in staff sickness and maternity leave. It was challenging recruiting a law teacher.
- Management Information System (MIS) had been working alongside Roz Abbott and had made the decision to purchase a different package (ALPS) which would be trialled for 1 year. The College had previously used ALPS and feel the new modifications could deliver what the College are looking for, this includes a dashboard for staff and governors.

### 2.2 Headline data+

Governors noted the reports.

- The Year 2 survey took place at the end of April, results were as expected and in line with the Year 1 outcome. The current questions were put together with support from the student executives and staff meetings. Following the results, further reflection on the phrasing of certain questions still needs refining. The College Governing Body were informed that the survey information was looked at in detail during the Quality Committee in April.

Question to the student governors: Did you feel there was anything that stood out or was surprising from the results?

The student governors felt that it was an accurate result from the perspective of what they were currently studying and that none of the information in particular stood out or raised anything new that wasn't already being discussed which included re-implementing the use of the last few minutes of lessons to discuss how what has been learnt in the lesson correlates to life after and outside of college.

Governors questioned the data from maths students and were informed that the maths cohort have had an unsteady year due to relying on agency staffing and having no course manager for the first term. The maths team are now fully staffed with a promising new team.

Governors discussed the potential further breakdown of data to include a summary and a visual break down which could accurately represent the number of students on each course due to this being so diverse. The College Governing Body were advised that this had also been raised during the Quality Committee and is something that would be investigated when presenting data going forwards.

Q: What happens when the results are received and how do staff receive the information?

A: Information is given to senior staff and course managers who then look further into the information and discuss this with individual staff. Students can also opt to put their name forwards to be part of a focus group to discuss the outcomes with staff and ideas of what could change and/or how the College can further support students. The survey results also correlate with course quality review weeks.

- **Attendance** was currently 91.9%, industrial strikes have had an impact on attendance with students also having been disproportionately affected by bus strikes.
- **Retention** over all was 94% with programme retention down from 88% last year to 86%. There are strong indications that one of the main reasons for this is mental health. The College were currently re-evaluating the 'tick box' for this on the form due to only being able to select one reason for leaving when it could be a multitude of different reasons. Governors stated that they would like to see the data that would be received nationally and that it would be useful to make comparisons.  
The College were still seeing the repercussions of Covid-19 and students who had an interrupted learning journey combined with less resilience and struggles with mental health. Staff were working alongside the Senior Management Team to identify weaker learners and how they could be further supported.

## 2.3 Admissions\*

Governors noted the report.

There had been 1475 offers made so far which is the highest the College has ever had, it was important to note that some of the applications may not make the entry requirements due to tougher grade boundaries.

Governors would like to see data regarding retention and the sustained numbers of students from each school and how this compares to previous data.

### ***ACTION BECKY FLOWER***

Governors noted that the increase in students coming from further afield which they feel is very positive, especially given the remote location and transport available.

## 2.4 Policies\*

Governors questioned the structure of policies being approved and were informed that the Principal and Helen Wells (Trust Governance Specialist) were working on the Trust and College Policies.

The following policies were approved by the College Governing Body;

First Aid Policy

Fitness for Study Procedure

Quality Policy

Residential and Day Trips Policy

Fire Safety Policy

Risk Assessment Policy – not approved, Mark Deakin - Health and Safety Lead Governor would like to work alongside the College to improve the information within the policy.

### ***ACTION – MD TO SUPPORT COLLEGE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO WORK ON POLICY***

## SECTION 3 – ACADEMIC REPORTS

### 3.1 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)\* update – Becky Flower+

Governors noted the changes to the QIP.

- Behaviour was a continued challenge in level 2 students. Training to support this for level 2 staff would be taking place initially, followed by the whole College at the beginning of next term.

- Governors invited to attend the College on the 5<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm for the Action Research event.
- The College were looking at implementing a change to when students are 'off timetable' for one week. This will no longer be continued due to the time not being utilised effectively combined with feedback from students.
- Courses have been RAG rated that need to be focused on regarding work readiness. 'Unloc – key to careers' conference would be taking place for students not directly applying to go to University. The aim of this was to support students in seeing what other options are available to them.

### **3.2 Funding bands**

Governors noted the report.

Q: Is there additional funding for high needs students?

A: Yes, we receive additional funding, and this is audited on how to spend.

### **3.3 Quality Committee feedback**

Dave Tomaney gave a brief explanation for the benefit of new governors the purpose and role of the Quality Committee.

Governors discussed the target grades and that it would be interesting to compare this data with the exam results. Governors were informed that the new ALPS system would give far more meaningful data and further breakdown for governors to be able to make comparisons. Governors discussed that this was initially raised over a year ago and that due to various reasons such as staffing issues, little progress had been made. The governors hope that with the new system this information can be provided.

Further discussions also needed to take place regarding circulating/feedback of the Quality Committee information with the College Governing Body. The Clerk would raise with the Principal and Chair regarding circulating this information with governors.

#### ***ACTION CLERK***

### **3.4 Level 2 update – Joe Bennett\***

Governors noted the detailed report.

Q: What are the reasons that students apply for a level 2 pathway?

A: International students who won't have completed recognised qualifications or who have been home schooled. It also includes students who know they may not achieve the necessary GCSE results.

Q: Is there going to be a knock on effect for funding due to the increased number of students?

Becky Flower advised that she would look into this and report back at the next meeting.

#### ***ACTION BECKY FLOWER***

Governors questioned further information about the level 2 pathways so that they could have a better understanding. The governors felt that students sometimes had to make difficult decisions for various reasons and the impact this could have on their overall College experience.

### **3.5 HESA Report\***

Governors noted what they expressed as an incredibly positive report and the importance of teaching students the ability to cope with what comes next in their educational journey after their time at college.

## **SECTION 4 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

#### **4.1 Draft Finance Committee Terms of Reference\***

Governors noted the Terms of Reference.

DT summarised and that the important outcome for the Finance Committee was to establish the relationship with the Trust and how they could best support the College. Overall, the Finance Committee is a sub-body of the College Governing Body to oversee the finances in more detail and for all governors to feel confident and satisfied that this information is being looked at in detail.

Governors approved the Terms of Reference.

### **SECTION 5 – GOVERNANCE**

#### **5.1 Residential Lead Governor update\***

Governors noted the report.

Health and Safety visit scheduled for Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May. The College were behind on audits for the College and Oak House due to the availability of auditors. This has now been booked in for the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June.

#### **5.2 Governance update+**

The Clerk advised that a new application for Community Governor had been received via the College website, the applicant has a background with digital analysis and is due to meet with the Chair and Principal in the coming weeks. With no further applications having been received for a second Parent Governor, this leaves 1 available vacancy on the College Governing Body.

The Clerk would provide further updates the next College Governing Body meeting in July.

### **SECTION 6 – OTHER MATTERS**

#### **6.1 Any other business**

Governors were invited to attend the following events.

- 27<sup>th</sup> June - Student Enrichment Day
- 3<sup>rd</sup> July - Summer Concert

Becky Flower discussed the potential of Student Executives having an agenda item going forwards to discuss what they are up to and keep governors informed. Governors feel one of the best parts of the role was being able to speak with students and hear their experiences and would welcome the feedback.

Governors were informed that the next academic year College Governing Body meetings would be agreed from July 2023 and were advised to pencil in the following suggested dates.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October – College Governing Body meeting

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November – Strategy afternoon

Meeting end 19.15pm

**These minutes were approved by the College Governing Body on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023.**