

## THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON Tuesday 1 October 2024 at 16.30

**Present:** Karl Banister (via Teams), Rev'd Lisa Barnett, Teddy Bridges, Roisin Buckley, Barbara Hobday, Ann Donoghue, Dan Griffin, Graham Lawrence, Dan Lodge (Principal), Paul Mittendorfer, Will Power, Julian Rooney, Clare Ruaux, Helen Smith, Lauren Smith, Dom Valente, Bev Valley

**In attendance:** Members of SMT - Ian Dumbleton (FD), Rob Hussey (VP Curriculum), Andrea John (VP Pastoral), Steve Martell (DP)

Helen Mayer-Dean (Director of Student Support – Safeguarding briefing only), Russha Sellings (Director of Governance/GD), Dom Wakefield (Co-optee)

**In the Chair:** Graham Lawrence

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting; new Governor Lauren Smith was welcomed, and introductions made for the benefit of all members. Apologies were received and accepted from Governor Steve Allen and Co-optees George Dummer and Sarah Ediss. Karl Banister joined the meeting online.

The Chair referred to the usual format of this first meeting with presentations that set the scene for the rest of the academic year.

#### Annual Safeguarding/Pastoral briefing for Governors

The Director of Student Support spoke of the updated statutory guidance with more significant updates expected in 2025. The VP (Pastoral) reminded Governors of their key responsibilities and the agreed changes to safeguarding reporting with additional assurances provided through the role of the Safeguarding Governor.

Reference was made to the programme of support for High Needs students since the increase in numbers with an EHCP and in receipt of funding. The overview documents would be shared with Governors after the meeting so they could understand in more detail the extensive support in place.

The Director of Student Support advised that owing to the increase in complexity and risk of vulnerable students, capacity had been added to the Safeguarding team. This included a new Wellbeing Practitioner appointed to provide specialist support in the period where students were waiting for external services. It was recognised that there was pressure on all services and a lack of access leading to increased interventions.

Governors heard of the expanded definition of safeguarding in the revised guidance. There were new inclusions for 'early help' and contextual safeguarding, that which also took place outside the home including online. Governors were alerted to local risks, especially around the main park in the town opposite the College which was regularly accessed by students, and the community response to ensure students' safety. Governors were keen to understand more about the digital safeguarding solution provided through Smoothwall and awareness amongst students and the parent body. The Director of Student Services explained the plans to continue to promote the protective measures offered through Smoothwall to students via communications including a dedicated area for students on SharePoint and tutorials. For parents, there was a Parent Platform and it was agreed following a suggestion from the Parent Governor to add some further infographics regarding signs of concern to look out for in young people.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

None declared with respect of the items on the agenda.

### 3. Minutes of the 10 July 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting including Part II minutes circulated to the relevant Governors were both approved without amendment.

### 4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not already covered by the agenda.

### 5. Written Resolutions

*Resolutions passed since the last meeting:* RAAC project approval

**Resolved: the minutes record the approval of the RAAC project and the submission of an application to the DfE for funding of remediation works before the deadline of 30-09-24.**

### 6. Presentation from the Principal Report

The Principal provided an introduction. SMT members would be invited to add at the relevant sections. There had been significant changes to the political landscape over the past 6 months. The Principal had recently met the new MP for Horsham at a Forest School event and hoped this was the start of a positive working relationship with the College.

#### i) Examination Results

The College was pleased with this year's exam results and the VP (Curriculum) said a fifth of grades were higher than national average. L3 BTEC results had greatly improved. Sixth Sense data placed the College in the top 20% nationally and it was hoped DfE Value Added data when published would also confirm this. Achievement (tracking retention and pass rates) had increased on the previous year, showing an upward trend over time. This included all 16-19 provision and Adult Education. The VP (Curriculum) took an action to confirm the retention rate specifically for T Levels at a Governor's request. *(Action: VP Curriculum)*

Governors asked about revisiting the entry requirements. The VP (Curriculum) said the focus this year had been on a robust enrolment ensuring each student who was eligible was on the right course which would continue to improve retention. Governors were supportive of this approach.

Governors were keen to hear more about interventions for subjects not reaching the agreed standards (below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile) and the VP (Curriculum) explained that as well as IQRs and EQRs there would be enhanced subject support commencing this year.

The VP (Curriculum) shared destination data for High Needs students. Governors understood that this year progress would be monitored through the quality assurance process.

It was further explained about Adult Education provision and the RAG rated outcomes also shown in terms of retention and success. Additional information would be provided to Governors following the meeting.

#### ii) Curriculum

Instead of the agreed full pause and review for a year, the new Government would conduct a shorter review, and confirmation of the outcome was now expected in December. This presented challenges with the next round of enrolment beginning with the Open Days in November. The VP (Curriculum) explained there were 17 vocational subjects under review, of these around half would be ineligible for funding including Health & Social Care. Governors expressed their concerns over the impact on employment pathways to the NHS.

#### iii) Enrolment

The DP confirmed the 1A enrolment was up to 1440 (an increase of 11% YoY). New systems and enhanced advice and guidance around the admissions criteria had resulted in a smooth experience and SMT were grateful to staff involved. The recent Ready to Learn event had also been positive.

Governors observed the projected growth figures for Horsham and West Sussex and asked how other S7 colleges would respond without further expansion. The Principal believed that it was likely they would be considering the position soon as the growth continued.

#### iv) People Strategy Update

SMT were keen to provide an enhanced employee value proposition, exploring options for flexible working to increase wellbeing and support and attract a more diverse workforce. However, the Principal said they had to be realistic about the need to balance the roles of student facing staff and those who could only perform their duties onsite. Other innovative ideas included an EV car salary sacrifice scheme which was currently being rolled out. The 'new deal for working people' formed part of the new Government's manifesto so it was likely a general shift would follow.

Governors wished to understand more about the staff response to the workload action plan. A key action had been to increase capacity in relevant departments as reported to Governors in the summer term. However, the Principal acknowledged that it would be helpful to survey staff on the progress and resulting perception of workload since the start. Governors suggested the survey include mechanism for feedback on the People Strategy more generally. **(Action: Principal)**

#### v) Property Strategy Update

The masterplan was well underway since the appointment of the new architect both in response to growth and to ensure the College continued to offer contemporary facilities and extended social space with a view to the unique heritage of the site. Much of the next stage would be driven through the Estates Committee and the Principal referred to the recent agreement by the Governing Body to rephrase the masterplan and prioritise the Tech centre in line with available funding. The Principal was delighted to confirm that there was finally news from Treasury that the loan from the Mercers' Company had been approved which meant that the College were 60% towards the total needed for a new building. Thanks were recorded to the Mercer's Company for their patience and support and the Principal and FD for navigating a successful outcome.

Governors asked about the future of the sports centre and engagement with Horsham District Council (HDC) and in addition whether facilities could be shared in a MAT model. The Principal responded that there had been some early engagement regarding planning and development with HDC. The new architects proposed in the future repurposing the current sports centre into social space and catering facilities, however a new sports centre would require significant additional funding which had not materialised, hence the need to prioritise classroom space. It would be possible to share facilities with other schools where schools were in the same legal structure, however it was still important to continue with the masterplan to ensure a solid foundation for the future.

#### vi) Budget Outturn 2023/24

The FD reported an income driven surplus of circa £600k. In terms of key metrics, it was pleasing to note in the current period, staff costs as a percentage of income was on target at 71%.

#### vii) Sector update

Progression towards academisation had been impacted by the election and a pause in decision making, although the Regional Teams were now restarting their formal meetings and clearing their backlogs. The TEG funding had been well spent and the Principal included the latest version of the HLA website which would be used initially for the purposes of consultation. The academy application was currently held with the Regional Director who requested a meeting which was due to take place later that week having been deferred from the summer term. AWP would consider the outcome and next steps.

The position of academies under the new Government and the role of LAs was somewhat uncertain. Governors heard the ESFA would be closing in two stages commencing 1 Oct and the financial oversight rolled into the remit of the Regional Teams currently responsible for school improvement. Further challenges presented by remaining in the FE sector had become apparent following a decision by the Government to fund the 5.5% teacher pay award for schools including 16-19 academies but not extend it to designated SFCs. The Sussex Principals had recently met to discuss the matter. The

Principal continued to be transparent with staff and was consulting with unions, however it was expected that as the 2% pay offer on the table had not been taken forward to members, it would not be accepted, increasing the likelihood of strike action.

Lastly, the fundamental review of the Ofsted framework included the recent announcement of the move away from single grade judgements which the Principal said applied to schools inspected from September 2024 only at the current time and would follow for colleges.

#### viii) News and events

Dates of upcoming events were shown on screen. Governors were encouraged to attend the Christmas Concert later in the term. There was an update on Planning Day during the next item.

### **7. Chair's Report**

*Papers: Top sheet, updated I&A's, resolution, Ofsted overview, cycle of business 24-25*

#### i) Updated I&A's (2024)

The Chair informed Governors the resolution included on the agenda would be removed for the meantime as legal advice had confirmed the governing document of the Collyer Endowment would remain as the current Scheme until the point of transfer from the old charity to the new CIO.

#### ii) The Collyer Endowment (CIO)

The main update was covered in the above item. It was pleasing to note the registration of the new charity on the 1 August 2024 given all the efforts to get to this point.

#### iii) Ofsted Preparation

The Chair advised that since the Strategy Day, further work with an external consultant to support the College and Governors who were likely to be involved in an inspection had started and some briefing documents were being prepared.

#### iv) GB cycle of business 2024/25

Governors heard that as the Planning Day would not have a strategic focus this year and would centre around teaching and learning, there was no need for attendance, however the offsite Strategy Day in the summer term would be a key event as the College moved into the new strategic planning cycle.

Governors were encouraged to visit the College during hours of operation this term which could be as part of the SAR-QIP or to visit a department or specific activity such as an enrichment which was requested by one Governor. The GD said this could be arranged before a Committee meeting if more convenient but would need to be pre-booked in with the governance support team. A visit record form would be circulated and the GD said it would be helpful if Governors could complete this after any visit.

### **8. AOB**

Nothing to report.

### **9. Meeting Assessment**

Nothing to note.

### **10. Dates 2024-25**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 10 December 2024, 16.30 at Collyer's

The meeting closed at 18.22

Chair .....

Date .....

RRS 08-10-2024