Richmond upon Thames College Board - Governance Position Paper

RuTC Board membership is as follows**:**
9 independent governors
The Principal and CEO
2 staff governors
2 student governors
Total – 14
There is currently two co-opted governors
The current I&As have a determined number of up to 15 independent members.

Full details of board profile and skills will be available by July and will be considered by the SRP at its next meeting in September 2020.

Board structure
The Board operates a traditional board structure with 6 committees. Board meetings take place at least four times a year. Committees are as follows:
Audit and Risk Committee
College Redevelopment Project Group
Curriculum Quality and Standards Committee
Finance and Resources Committee
Search, Remuneration and Performance Committee
Special Committee

Membership to committees is based on the skills and expertise required to comply with the terms of reference.   Co-opted members bring additional expertise where needed.

A Board and Committee structure chart and membership list is available.

Statutory documents
- The Board has Instruments and Articles of Government (I&As) and byelaws in place which are reviewed every two years or as required. The most recent review is June 2020
- All Committees have terms of reference that are reviewed annually and approved
- The Board has adopted the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and the Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code and board performance is being reviewed against the Code this year and will be reviewed annually going forward
- The Board and its Committees review and approve relevant governance and College policies and the Audit Committee receives a policy framework
- All Board members complete and return declarations of interests

Skills audit

An annual skills audit will be carried out to enable the SRP to make recommendations to the Board on the appointment of new governors; the reappointment of existing governors; the succession strategies that will be required to enable succession to governance roles and the recruitment strategies to be undertaken. The skills audit helps demonstrate that governors have the necessary range of skills, expertise and diversity to support the College effectively and responsibly for a sustainable and successful future and identifies vacancies on the Board. It is important the full value of the information collated from a skills audit is taken and that the SRP reviews the outcomes of the skills audit annually and as vacancies arise.

Governors completed a skills audit in 2018 and a revised audit will be circulated in June 2020 with results coming to the September 2020 SRP Committee.

Board profile

The skills audit survey will include questions to inform a full Board profile audit which will come to the SRP in September and be used to inform succession planning.

Succession planning
- The Board is relatively new with two governors starting a second term of office in September 2020
- The staff governors' terms of office finishes in March 2021 and under the current Standing Orders they will be eligible to nominate for a further term of office
- Succession planning is a standing item on the SRP agenda which meets at least 3 times a year
- A recent round of succession planning in December 2019-February 2020 was completed with four governors recruited with a range of skills including financial, marketing, safeguarding and HE expertise. One governor left shortly after appointment and a further search for a governor with FE and safeguarding experience is underway. A new Chair of the Board with FE Board experience was appointed in March 2018.

New appointments:
- Are made following governance best practice models of appointment and abide by the Nolan Principles
- Are based on skills and experience
- Going forward will use positive action to address any imbalance in equality issues such as gender, ethnicity and other protected characteristics

Self-Assessment

The Board views self-assessment as an important and ongoing process made up of different activities to provide a holistic view. At its meetings in March and June the SRP considered and agreed the following matrix of activities for self-assessment for 2019-20:
- **Board self-assessment**
  National survey annually which assesses against Ofsted criteria and allows benchmarking. This survey is useful to provide into the College's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and for governance planning for the following year
- **Committee review of effectiveness**

An annual review of committee effectiveness matching the Committee's terms of reference against business conducted throughout the year. The review identifies areas where the Committee is focused, areas for further work for the following year and is a useful evidence base for external agencies

- **Annual review of the Chair and Head of Governance**
  There have been changes in both roles mid-year so it is proposed that this exercise takes place early in 2021
- **Annual governor appraisals**
  Annual 121 meetings with governors and the Chair/Vice Chair(s) with an opportunity for governors to share their views. The aim is to ensure governors are supported, their skills and experience are utilised and to identify any areas of concern
- **Regular meetings with the Chair, Principal and CEO and Head of Governance**
  Meetings are scheduled fortnightly to discuss College and Board matters, share information and work on Board agendas
- **Independent peer review**
  To consider whether to undertake a review during 2020-21
- **Review of governance**
  The interim governance advisor undertook a governance audit during April to look at the governance processes in place and further governance work required. The governance workplan was shared with the Chair of SRP, the Chair and Principal and CEO and is a standing item on the triumvirate fortnightly meeting.