

## **Record of the Proceedings of the Meeting of the Governing Body of Rose Bruford College of Theatre & Performance held on Thursday 5 May 2022 at the College**

### **Present:**

Jennifer Sims (Chair)  
Clarie Middleton (Principal)  
Rod Brown  
Sarah Howard  
Caroline Jenkins (Staff governor)  
George Littlejohn (Vice-Chair)  
Dr Brian Lobel (Staff governor)  
Hassan Mahamdallie  
Don Massey  
Professor Mike Saks  
Janet Smith  
Professor Steven Spier

### **In attendance:**

Joseph Lowe – Director of Finance and Operations  
Angela Taylor – Academic Registrar  
Jim Benson – Secretary

### **2021/68 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Janet Smith who was attending for the first time as a member.

### **2021/69 Apologies**

69.1 These were received from Anni Domingo, Akshita Brahma (Student governor), Rogan Dixon, and Sylvia Darkwa Ohemeng.

69.2 Apologies were also received from Professor Mary Oliver (Vice Principal).

### **2021/70 Conflict of Interest Declarations**

70.1 The Secretary had a standing declaration due to his appointment at the University of East London.

70.2 Sarah Howard declared that she had been appointed as Access Manager at the Shakespeare Globe in London. The Secretary confirmed that any conflict which might arise from this matter should be able to be managed.

## **2021/71 Confirmation of minutes**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 March 2022**

The Board approved the minutes for publication.

## **2021/72 Matters arising from the minutes**

72.1 The Academic Registrar confirmed that the process for determining OfS Reportable Events was in hand and would be finalised shortly.

72.2 It was confirmed that the discussion about the future strategic direction of the College would take place at the next meeting when the outcome of the ISTA bid was known.

72.3 The Secretary confirmed that the advert for Board Members had been published and applications would be reviewed after the closing date of 31 May 2022.

72.4 The Academic Registrar confirmed that a fully articulated Risk Register would be submitted to the Board in June 2022.

72.5 It was agreed that the update on the transfer of Students from the Academy of Live & Recorded Arts (ALRA) would be dealt with as part of the Principal's Report.

72.6 It was confirmed that all other matters had been dealt with or appeared on the agenda.

## **2021/73 Principal's Report**

### ***Update on the transfer of Students from the Academy of Live & Recorded Arts***

73.1 The Principal stated that while the arrangements for transferring students from ALRA were complicated, staff had risen to the challenge and had coped extremely well. She stated that the vast majority of ALRA students had transferred to the College adding that their morale had remained high, seeing this as a good outcome under the circumstances, and the OfS was pleased with the College's response. The Board was asked to note the following points:

- i. Those students on the two-year Masters course would receive a RBC award;
- ii. teaching had continued at the Wigan campus and proceeded without undue problems;
- iii. the Wandsworth campus had been deemed as unsuitable but teaching had commenced at alternative locations in London and had proved to be successful;

iv. the alternative locations in London, such as the ones in Brixton House and the Omnibus Theatre in Clapham, should prove useful connections for the College;

v. Lisa Stubbs had been appointed as the Project Manager and had performed extremely well.

73.2 The Academic Registrar updated the Board on the professional arrangements that had been put in place for the transfer of the ALRA students. She advised that Karen Ewer had been appointed as the Administrative Project Manager and had facilitated the transfer of the ALRA students to the College systems very successfully. The Board was asked to note that the information held by St Mary's University, the former validating body, had proved to be in part unreliable so the College was likely to have to create a 'no-detriment' policy for any student with incomplete academic details.

73.3 The Principal confirmed that student support was in place for ALRA students at the start of the transfer and was being developed in response to their needs. She added that certain policies had to be explained to the students, such as those in respect of bullying and anti-discrimination, to ensure that the College ethos was properly understood. The Board confirmed that while it was content with the progress made and delighted to hear of the commitment of staff to make this arrangement work, it needed to be kept abreast of developments. The Chair stated that this issue needed Board time as it would impact on College business. It was agreed an update would be provided to the meeting of F&GP Committee on 6 June 2022 as well as at the next Board meeting. The Chair added that she should be alerted to any issue of concern that might arise in relation to this matter.

### ***The rest of the Principal's Report***

The Principal advised that the College was in the middle of the 2022/23 recruitment cycle and her report outlined the information received from UCAS. She asked that the information on student recruitment in her report be considered alongside the information in the Academic Report. In summary, the College had made more offers for places in 2022/23 but there had been a slow response across the sector as students were clearly considering their options. The UCAS deadline for responding to offers was 9 June 2022. At present the figures showed that acting courses were recruiting well but the digital courses continued to struggle

It was reported that Stuart Page had been appointed as the Head of Undergraduate Studies at the College and an offer had been made to appoint the Head of Postgraduate Studies. The Principal would advise on the outcome of this appointment in due course.

### **2021/74 Academic Report**

74.1 The Academic Registrar asked the Board to note the progress being made on developing the single academic framework. The Board stated that while matters

regarding ALRA were undoubtedly a distraction, it asked for information on a delivery date for the creation of the single academic framework along with project milestones.

74.2 The Academic Registrar confirmed there were two other matters to note:

i. The response rates to the NSS as of 20 April 2022 which stood at 75%, compared to just under 80% at the same time last year. The survey closed on 30 April 2022. A slightly higher response was achieved in the previous NSS largely due to the views prompted by the pandemic.

ii. The validation event for the Notting Hill Academy of Music which was proving to be a highly productive partnership.

74.3 The Chair stated she was delighted to see the positive feedback received about the arrangements the College put in place during the pandemic.

## **2021/75 Student Report**

75.1 It was noted that the President of the Students' Union did not provide a report and was not available to answer questions. The Secretary advised that he had confirmed with the President of the Students' Union that she could attend and make an oral report but he had received no response to this offer. Concerns were expressed about the lack of engagement with the President of the Students' Union and the student body, although it was confirmed that she and other students met regularly with the Principal. The Board stated that its duty to provide oversight on Students' Union activities was in danger of not being met as it was unlikely the annual accounts would be available for scrutiny in June 2022. It was also noted that the lack of opportunity for the Board to hear regularly from student representatives was a concern.

75.2 The Director of Finance advised that the issue around the Students' Union Bank Account had not yet been resolved. He added that matters might improve if it were possible to make the President of the Students' Union a full time paid sabbatical officer post. The Board requested that, if the annual accounts were not available for scrutiny in June 2022, the Secretary should outline the actions that the Board be required to take to ensure that it could be seen to have tried to meet its duty in providing provide oversight on Students' Union activities.

## **2021/76 Finance Report**

76.1 The Director of Finance and Operations stated that dealing with matters relating to ALRA had prevented him from producing the management accounts and the 2020/21 Year end outturn report. He stated that as his role on working on ALRA started to diminish he would be able to focus on delivering these reports. It was agreed that the management accounts and the 2020/21 Year end outturn report would be available for the meeting of F&GP on 6 June 2022. The Board considered it

unacceptable for the Management Accounts and other essential financial information not to be available as required.

76.2 The Board confirmed that it needed to be assured regularly on the College's financial position given the debate on Going Concern that took place recently. In response to a question about progress being made with regards to tackling the issue of the use of Visiting Lecturers and consultants, the Principal stated that she was aware that this was declining but could not confirm exactly as this matter rested with the School Heads. The Board advised that SMT needed to have greater oversight of this process in order for the Board to be appropriately informed and assured. This was noted by SMT.

## **2021/77 Key points from minutes of committees**

### ***Governance Committee – 31 March 2022***

77.1 The Chair of the Governance Committee welcomed Janet Smith to the Board and thanked her for making the commitment to become a Governor at the College and a member of Audit Committee. He also thanked Don Massey for agreeing to be Chair of Audit Committee, Sarah Howard for being re-appointed as a Board member and Hassan Mahamdallie for agreeing to be Chair of Remuneration Committee.

### ***Actions following the meeting***

77.2 The Board approved the appointment of Vivien Goodwin as a member of the Board with immediate effect.

### **Strategic Discussion**

## **2021/78 OfS Conditions of Registration Review and CUC Code of Governance**

78.1 The Secretary spoke to the paper and advised that this was an annual review which had been initially considered at Governance Committee. He advised that the College was compliant in most areas of the OfS Conditions of Registration and CUC Code of Governance but analysis had yet to be carried out against the new B Conditions of Registration.

78.2 The analysis against the CUC Code of Governance was also noted by the Board. The Secretary stated that some work on academic governance, stakeholder engagement, EDI/CSR reporting to the Board and having an external effectiveness review was required, but essentially the Board should be satisfied that compliance was achieved. He added that any outstanding issue should be able to be readily addressed by SMT. This was noted by the Board.

## **2021/79 Sustainability Annual Report**

The Principal stated that the production of the Sustainability Annual Report was the responsibility of the Director of Finance and Operations. The Director of Finance and Operations agreed to produce the Sustainability Annual Report for the next meeting.

### **Formal Business**

#### **2021/80 Office for Students Consultations**

80.1 The report was noted by the Committee.

80.2 The Academic Registrar stated that the College was providing a response to the consultation on the introduction of a Lifelong Loan Entitlement that was reported to the last meeting. She advised that the response would follow the GuildHE line and offered to send the report to the Board.

80.3 In response to a question about the work involved in responding to these consultations, the Principal advised that it was important for SMT to understand the impact of policy proposals and to make its views known when matters could impact on the College. She confirmed that the majority of the work in responding to consultations was undertaken by the GuildHE policy advisors.

#### **2021/81 Office for Students Communications**

The report was noted by the Committee. The Secretary advised that the College would have to publish a sexual misconduct and harassment statement. The Academic Registrar agreed to review this.

#### **2021/82 Any other business**

82.1 The Chair confirmed that she was drafting a response to the recent Internal Audit review of governance stating that it would ask that the recommendations be refined to focus on real enhancements.

82.2 The Vice Chair advised those present to review the National Audit Office report on the OfS.

#### **2021/83 Dates of future meetings**

The Chair asked the Board to note the dates of meetings for 2021/22.

Thursday 30 June 2022

#### **2021/84 Dates of future meetings in 2022/23**

The Chair asked the Board to note the dates of meetings for 2022/23 including the dates for Committee meetings:

Thursday 22 September 2022

Thursday 24 November 2022+AGM (to incorporate an away day to start at 10am)

Thursday 26 January 2023

Thursday 23 March 2023

Thursday 4 May 2023

Thursday 6 July 2023