



Minutes of the Full Corporation Meeting

held 25 March 2010

Present: Pam Thomas (*Chair*), Leslie Williams (*Vice Chair*), Keith Bate (*Principal*), Duncan Bryson, Andy Comyn, Corinne Crannage, Paul Downing, Andrew Hanson, Neil Hobson, Phil Osborne, Alison Perks, Alison Shipway, Claire Smith, Gloria Smith, Alan Taylor, Daniel Willetts

In attendance: Jacquie Carman (*Director of Finance and Administration*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)

Observer: Karen Gentles (RSM Tenon)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received on behalf of Liane Purnell.

2 Declarations of Interest

Gloria Smith Declared her standing interest in relation to partnership working arrangements between Halesowen College and Prospects Services Limited.

Keith Bate declared an interest under agenda item 13, Remuneration of Senior Post Holders.

3 Minutes of Meetings

The Clerk reported that under the minutes for the meeting of 26 November 2009; Item 14, Minutes, Finance and Resources Committee: 11 November 2009 should be amended to include receipt of the confidential minutes of that committee.

The minutes of the meetings held 26 November 2009 and 16 January 2010 and confidential minutes of meetings held 9 July 2009 and 14 December 2009 were approved as correct records. There were no matters arising.

4 Corporation

Review of Governance and Strategic Leadership in English Further Education

The Clerk reported on the consultation process for the review undertaken by the Association of Colleges and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service. Members agreed that the report be forwarded to the Association of Colleges.

Action: Clerk

E Governance

The Clerk reported on progress made in piloting electronic meeting arrangements.

Following the successful use of laptops at the February meeting of the Audit Committee it was proposed that further committees trial the use of electronic papers and laptops. A review of resources and was also being undertaken.

Alison Perks confirmed some practical difficulties in accessing electronic agendas and papers which was noted for address.

Action: Clerk

The Corporation endorsed the arrangements for developing E Governance.

Modification Order for Instrument and Articles of Government

The Clerk explained the basis of the Draft Modification Order which was due to come into force on 1 April 2010.

The Corporation noted the proposed changes.

Corporation Development Plan 2010

The Clerk presented the Development Plan based on the Corporation self assessment activity, the Post Inspection Action Plan and areas of continuous development.

Andy Comyn asked how the Corporation self assessment process related to potential 'lighter touch' processes under a proposed self regulation code. The Clerk responded that a self assessment process would remain necessary to demonstrate robust internal processes.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Corporation Development Plan 2010.

Review of Contents of the Confidential File

In line with annual review procedures the Clerk reported on the contents of the confidential file.

The Corporation resolved to approve the release of items no longer deemed confidential from the confidential file.

5 Recommendations from Audit Committee

Risk Management Update 2009/10

Jacque Carman presented the risk management update incorporating policy, procedure, appetite categories and curriculum area risk assessment updates.

Jacque Carman explained the basis for assessing risks and the importance of the Corporation recognising the assessed areas of high risk. It was also noted that the number of risks to consider were increasing. The highest risk continued to be adverse financial impact due to changes in funding methodology/resource allocation.

Jacquie Carman reported that a review of the Disaster Management Policy had yielded some procedure changes and that the Risk Management Policy on addressing risks identified falling outside the risk appetite had been revised.

Andy Comyn asked about the impact of Fraud Awareness Training for staff on the risk assessment rating for 'Failure to detect fraud and corruption'. Jacquie Carman noted that risk was reduced by increased awareness but that it remained a high risk and the need to be robust remained.

Leslie Williams questioned if some risks rated at 12 did not fairly reflect the College activity to mitigate such risks. Jacquie Carman explained that the rating was in part due to the combined score of two measures of risk, likelihood and impact and that this perspective would be considered in the forthcoming review of risk in relation to Functional Plans.

Keith Bate explained that risk was increased when trying to increase performance in a high risk environment.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Risk Management Update 2009/2010 incorporating the Risk Management Procedure and Risk Appetite and the Risk Management Policy.

6 Recommendations from Finance and Resources Committee

Revenue Budget 2009/10

Jacquie Carman presented the review of budget highlighting surplus as a percentage of income. The Learning and Skills Council continued to be the main source of income and an additional £400,000 had been received based on 400 additional learners. £47,000 had been received for specific delivery to 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training. The pay budget continued to match levels of work and the student welfare spend had increased, as had the legal and property fees associated with capital development projects. Key risks remained unchanged.

Jacquie Carman reported that following permission received from the Learning and Skills Council regarding the Capital Development project for the construction of Block 9 the required impairment review for the demolition of Block O had been undertaken. This had been incorporated into the income and expenditure accounting, addressed by a release from the designated capital reserve.

In response to a question from Andy Comyn, Jacquie Carman explained that a report to the Finance and Resources Committee addressed in detail the approach of the College to achieving value for money. Keith Bate explained that the current changes to funding methodology made delivery on value for money increasingly complex.

Alison Shipway asked about the financial impact of levels of unplanned absence. Jacquie Carman explained that short term impact could be sustained but that risk would change if this were incurred over a longer period.

The Corporation resolved to approve the revisions to Revenue Budget 2009/10 dated February 2010.

Budgeting Policy

Jacquie Carman presented the timetable and methodology for the annual budgeting process incorporating changes to the income headings to reflect the changed funding agencies.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Budgeting Policy.

Framework for Pay and Conditions of Service

Keith Bate explained proposals for a Curriculum Leadership Programme following on from previous reports on curriculum leadership and management and recognition of course and subject leaders. Keith Bate further explained additional proposals for support staff under a Making a Difference Programme.

Duncan Bryson thought that staff would welcome training for what was required of curriculum leadership and asked how, given its importance, the plan sat with regard to levels of staff management, an ongoing programme of development and potential for new roles. Keith Bate responded that the programme was a first step, initially to meet requirements under the Qualifications and Credit Framework and to support and recognise staff, particularly through accreditation. This could provide a basis for other changes coming to the sector under self regulation which might include emerging new roles.

Leslie Williams asked if the programme would be mandatory for staff in relevant roles and how motivation and measurement of successful completion would be addressed. Neil Hobson asked how the programme would be practically incorporated into ongoing development. Keith Bate explained that the programme was aimed at 125 teaching staff, both managers and course leaders and would also be open to aspiring staff. It was hoped that more experienced members of staff would be enlisted to assist in programme delivery. Following completion of the programme further development could be built into the Continuous Professional Development arrangements. Keith Bate proposed to report back on measuring outcomes and value for money to the Corporation meeting in July 2010.

Alison Perks asked how support staff would be selected. Keith Bate confirmed that the Making a Difference Programme was aimed at support staff managers and staff identified through appraisal.

The Corporation resolved

- To authorise the Principal to proceed with the Curriculum Leadership and Making a Difference programmes.
- That the Finance and Resources Committee monitor the arrangements with a full report being submitted to the Corporation at the end of the scheme.

7 Recommendations from Performance Review Committee

Retention and Achievement Targets 2009/10

Keith Bate presented the targets for 2009/10 for Corporation endorsement.

Phil Osborne asked if any targets were set below the national standard, Andy Hanson asked about the efficacy of some targets of 100% and Alison Perks asked how

realistic some large increases in high level grade targets were. Keith Bate explained that course predictions were made from informed knowledge reflecting current student numbers and considering the March to June period.

The Corporation resolved to adopt the Retention and Achievement Targets 2009/10

Annual Report – Safeguarding/Child Protection (including Vulnerable Adults)

Keith Bate presented the report, the title of which reflected the higher focus and increased recognition of safeguarding. The report gave an overview of raising awareness and staff training including attendance by the Principal at Level 2 training by the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board and 'Train the Trainers' sessions for the Director of Student Services and the Student Services Manager. Keith Bate also reported that student referrals had been made to the Local Authority designated officer and that there had been no staff referrals under the procedure for reporting allegations of abuse.

In response to a question from Leslie Williams members discussed liability in relation to employers and training organisations and further discussed increased student CRB checks and reference requests in relation to placements.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Annual Report – January 2010 Safeguarding/Child Protection (including Vulnerable Adults).

8 Campus Developments

Jacquie Carman referred members to the Accommodation Strategy and the medium term approach for the development of Block 10 and 11 to complete the replacement of Block 0 and mobile classrooms.

Learning and Skills Council permission had been received and a strong financial case made for the development of Block 9. This project would be completed in summer 2011, hence it was now timely to consider the affordability and alternative options related to developing Block 10. Jacquie Carman presented for consideration detailed information encompassing Commentary to a 10 Year Financial Plan, a Cost Plan, a Learning and Skills Council Application and the Educational Case.

With regard to the financial case Jacquie Carman reported that work had been undertaken with Paul Mantle Partnership on a cost plan. The construction element for Block 10 compared well to both Block 8 and Block 9 schemes at just under £2,683,000.

Within the Learning and Skills Council ten year plan format the calculated ratios had indicated that the scheme was affordable and that the College could maintain 'Outstanding' financial health grading.

An elemental cost analysis detailed alternative options such as lease, rental or new build off-site.

The education case for the model revealed that space utilisation figures demonstrated under capacity and that the College would remain so following the development of the proposed Block 10. The model indicated affordability to build Block 10 as part of the phased approach to campus development.

(Phil Osborne gave apologies and left the meeting)

The Corporation resolved to submit to the Learning and Skills Council an application for permission to proceed with the construction of Block 10 at a projected cost of £2.683m.

9 Strategic Planning

Keith Bate presented progress made against Strategic Planning Key Performance Indicators, tracking performance in relation to 2008/09 and 2009/10 of the five year plan. Keith Bate indicated the potential for partnership working to reduce in the current climate.

The updated position was noted.

10 New Safeguarding Forum

Keith Bate explained that it was important to consider the changes to the legislative framework, in particular safeguarding. Proposals to consider all aspects together under one forum had been considered by the Health and Safety Committee with a recommendation to adopt this approach initially for one year.

The current receipt of the Health and Safety Committee minutes by the Finance and Resources Committee would be replaced by a termly report to the Corporation.

Andy Hanson and Gloria Smith commended the forum as an excellent idea.

The Corporation resolved that the Principal put in place a Safeguarding Forum as considered by the Health and Safety Committee for 2010/11 subject to a report on the effectiveness of this new body at the end of the year.

11 College Charter and Complaints

Keith Bate presented the basis of the review of arrangements surrounding the College Charter and the College complaints procedure.

A revised model incorporated a Student Charter, A Framework for Measuring the Student Charter and updating of complaints reporting mapped against the charter headings. Reports would span three phases of annual activity including hard and soft measures.

In response to Alison Perks, Keith Bate confirmed that students had been consulted.

Both Claire Smith and Daniel Willets felt that it would be good to increase student awareness of the Charter especially how it was being met.

Leslie Williams noted that the framework also provided opportunity to give information on positive aspects.

The Corporation resolved to adopt the revised Student Charter and the framework for measuring and monitoring performance for the 2010/11 cycle.

12 Green Travel Plan

Jacquie Carman presented the plan outlining the key objective of traffic reduction across all College sites and in relation to the College overarching strategic objectives.

Staff and students had been surveyed on transport arrangements. Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council had been scheduled to attend the summer meeting of the Student Union to champion green travel and the College had a Green Travel Working Group. Further actions were detailed in the report which was being sent to Dudley metropolitan Borough Council for comments.

The Corporation resolved to adopt the Green Travel Plan.

In accordance with the agreement of the meeting the minutes of the committee meetings were taken prior to the confidential item.

14 Minutes

• Search and Governance Committee: 26 November 2009

The Corporation resolved to receive the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee held 26 November 2009 and the resolution therein; the resolution being:

Member Appointments

The Search and Governance Committee resolved to recommend to the Corporation the appointment of Corinne Crannage and Duncan Bryson for a period of two years commencing November 2009 subject to set eligibility clearance.

• Finance and Resources Committee Confidential: 11 December 2009

The Corporation resolved to receive the confidential minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee held 11 December 2009 and the resolution therein; the resolution being:

Additional Accommodation

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to recommend to the Corporation that:

1. In consultation with the College property advisers, the Principal be authorised to proceed in the acquisition of the property known as Masonic Hall, Furnace Lane, Halesowen, subject to the cost of purchasing the property and overall project costs not exceeding those outlined in the financial appraisal considered by the Finance and Resources Committee.
2. Any purchase would be subject to securing planning consent for the change of use of the property.
3. Other options to relocate catering and performing arts activities during the construction of Block 9 and the redevelopment of Block 0 be pursued alongside the Masonic Hall in recognition that this acquisition may not materialise.

- **Search and Governance Committee: 28 January 2010**

The Corporation resolved to receive the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee held 28 January 2010 and the resolutions therein; the resolutions being:

Strategic Issues

eGovernance

The Search and Governance Committee resolved to recommend the extension of the pilot working arrangements for eGovernance to the Search and Governance Committee in the summer term and the Finance and Resources Committee in the autumn term with monitoring by the Search and Governance Committee.

Committee Terms of Reference

The Search and Governance Committee resolved to defer its recommendation to the Corporation regarding the revision of the Committee Terms of Reference to include a role in relation to corporate governance.

- **Audit Committee: 9 February 2010**

The Corporation resolved to receive the minutes of the Audit Committee held 9 February 2010 and the resolutions therein; the resolutions being:

Progress Report on Audit Action Plans

The Audit Committee resolved to receive the Progress Report on Internal Audit Action Plans (09/02/10) and authorised the removal of closed items from the list.

RSM Tenon Internal Audit Reports

The Audit Committee resolved to accept the Internal Audit Reports on Governance: The Halesowen Foundation (01.09/10), Marketing (03.09/10), Learner Support Funds (02.09/10), and the Progress Report (February 2010) and the management response to them.

Revised Operational Audit Plan

The Audit Committee resolved to approve the revisions to the Internal Audit Operational Audit Plan for 2009/10.

External Auditor

The Audit Committee resolved to receive the report on Performance Indicators for External Audit 2008/2009 and approve no changes to the key Performance Indicators for 2009/10.

Tender for Provision of External Audit Services

The Audit Committee resolved to:

- Invite the external audit providers specified to tender for external audit services at Halesowen College for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13.
- Approve the external audit services procedure and the timescales for the tender exercise following which the Audit Committee will recommend the appointment of an external auditor to the Corporation in July 2010.

Risk Management Update 2009/10

The Audit Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation the Risk Management Update 2009/2010, the Risk Management Procedure and Risk Appetite and the Risk Management Policy.

- **Finance and Resources Committee: 24 February 2010**

The Corporation resolved to receive the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee held 24 February 2010 and the resolutions therein; the resolutions being:

Framework for Pay and Conditions of Service

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation that:

1. A curriculum leadership programme for 2010/11 be introduced linked with appraisal, development needs and a clear set of criteria relating to fulfilling the scheme.
2. All staff identified to participate in the scheme would include in their individual CPD plans fulfilment of the programme commencing with induction and initial elements June/July 2010. The agreed programme would be tailored to an individual's needs and include reference to more experienced members of staff supporting newer appointees. The programme would be monitored by line managers with a mid-year progress review. At the end of the academic year achievement of the programme would be assessed and confirmed.
3. On certification that an individual has successfully completed the programme, the individual concerned would then be eligible for an enhanced non-superannuable payment of £300 in July 2011.
4. That the Corporation set aside £45,000 from the operating surplus in 2009/10 to be earmarked as a designated reserve to fund this investment for the future.
5. The Principal considers options for the possibility of a CPD scheme which could be introduced for support staff corresponding with the curriculum leadership scheme to aid the successful delivery of transformational projects 2010/11.

Review of Revenue Budget 2009/10

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation the approval of the revised Revenue Budget.

Review of Budgeting Policy

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation the approval of the Budgeting Policy.

Tuition Fees and Fee Remission Policy 2010/11

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to approve the Tuition Fees and Fee Remission Policy 2010/11.

Data Protection Policy

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to approve the revised Data Protection Policy.

Treasury Management and Investment

The Finance and Resources Committee noted the report and resolved to approve Appendix A of the Treasury Management Policy.

Review of Procurement Policy and Standing Orders Relating to Contracts

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to approve the revised Procurement Policy and Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.

Purchasing Update

The Finance and Resources Committee resolved to approve the inclusion of an annual procurement report in the Finance and Resources Committee cycle of business.

- **Performance Review Committee: 11 March 2010**

The Corporation resolved to receive the minutes of the Performance Review Committee held 11 March 2010 and the resolutions therein; the resolutions being:

Retention and Achievement Targets

The Performance Review Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation the adoption of the Retention and Achievement Targets 2009/2010.

Safeguarding/Child Protection Annual Report

The Performance Review Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation the Annual Report – January 2010, Safeguarding/Child Protection (including Vulnerable Adults) for approval.

Under Instrument 14 members resolved that staff and student members withdraw in relation to pay and conditions related solely to that member of staff or to staff senior to themselves.

Corinne Crannage, Duncan Bryson, Claire Smith and Daniel Willets, Jacquie Carman, Jennifer Sunter and Keith Bate left the meeting.

13 Remuneration of Senior Post Holders (Confidential)

As per confidential minute.

15 Any Other Business

Keith Bate informed the Corporation that the Total Quality Standard as reported to the Corporation by Mary Samuels had been achieved.

Pam Thomas informed members that she would be consulting with them on the future use of the Board Room.

Alan Taylor commended the Halesowen College student for the winning design of the Halesowen Flag.

16 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 22 May 2010 at 9am.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm