

## STAFFORD COLLEGE CORPORATION

### **MINUTES of CORPORATION MEETING, 22 APRIL 2010**

- Present: A P Davison (Chair), M R Bagguley, S Birkin, I Blachford,  
G Davies-Marshall, Cllr W D Davis, J F Duggan, Mrs H Haroon-Iqbal,  
I Mason
- In Attendance: J P Charleton (Clerk), Mrs J Pountney, C Riding, I Rigby
- Observer: R Barnett, I Starkie
- Apologies: P Buttery, Dr H Duggal, J Greenhill, G M Humby, G Mason, Ms A Piercy,  
Dr T Ramgopal, Mrs J Tanner, Col C Turner, S Willis, Cllr M Winnington,  
Mrs V Woodward

### **PART I**

#### 1671.0 MEMBERSHIP

The Chair reminded members of their duty to declare an interest, financial or otherwise, in any item on the Agenda. Cllr D Davis declared that as Cabinet member of Stafford Borough Council for Planning and Regeneration he had an interest in Agenda Item 8 – Accommodation Strategy – in respect of planning permission issues.

*The Chair noted that in the absence of the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) the Corporation briefing on the College's partnership with Staffordshire University would be deferred to the July meeting of the Corporation*

#### 1672.0 PROCEDURES FOR SENIOR POSTHOLDERS

Mrs J Pountney, Head of Corporate Services, presented for approval the revised model Senior Postholder Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures recently updated by the AoC in line with the latest ACAS Code of Practice.

Prior to the meeting a number of changes to the model procedures had been suggested by a member. Following advice from the AoC and further discussion with the member concerned, the majority of the proposed changes had been agreed for inclusion in the revised procedures.

After discussion it was agreed that the updated revised Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures be presented for approval to the July Corporation following consultation on the proposed changes with the College's Senior Postholders.

Members also agreed that the Procedure for the Recruitment and Selection of Senior Postholders be resubmitted for approval to the July Corporation.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the following revised procedures be resubmitted for approval to the July Corporation following consultation with the College's Senior Postholders:**

- **Disciplinary Procedure for Senior Postholders**
- **Grievance Procedure for Senior Postholders**
- **Recruitment and Selection of Senior Postholders**

*At this point Mrs Pountney left the meeting*

1673.0 MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2009

- (a) Part I Minutes

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the minutes be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.**

- (b) Matters Arising

Minute 1660 (b) (i) – Financial Statements 2008/09

The Clerk reported that following a member's suggestion KPMG LLP had agreed to submit the draft letter of representation on the financial statements to the Audit Committee in November for recommendation to the Corporation.

1674.0 SUMMARY REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

- (a) Curriculum Standards and Performance Committee, 1 March 2010

The Chair of the Committee reported on the following issues considered at this meeting:

- The Committee had approved the revised draft Constitution of the Student Council
- The Student Induction Questionnaire conducted in October 2009 had confirmed the trend for improved student satisfaction compared to national benchmarks
- The Committee had received a report on the College's success rates for 2008/09 compared to the national average

- (b) Search and Governance Committee, 8 March 2010

The Chair of the Committee reported on the following issues considered at this meeting:

- (i) Board/ Committee Membership

The Committee had considered a recommendation from the Clerk regarding a proposed change in the membership of Committees of the Corporation.

**It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Search and Governance Committee:**

- (i) **Mr I Blachford be transferred from the Resources Committee to the Curriculum Standards and Performance Committee with immediate effect;**
- (ii) **Cllr M Winnington be transferred from the Curriculum Standards and Performance Committee to the Resources Committee with immediate effect.**

(ii) Streamlining the work of the Board

The Committee had considered a report from the Clerk proposing the use of an Executive Summary template for certain reports to the Corporation.

**It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Search and Governance Committee:**

**the proposed draft Executive Summary template be approved for review in a year's time.**

(iii) Appointment of Board/Committee Members

The Committee considered a number of applications for membership, having regard to the latest Members' Skills and Expertise Audit and details of the Board's composition by age, gender and ethnic group.

**It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Search and Governance Committee:**

- (a) **Mr G M Humby be re-appointed as an External Member for a four-year term of office with effect from 21 March 2010;**
- (b) **Mrs J Deaville be appointed as an Associate Member of the Corporation with effect from 23 April 2010 (Mr M Bagguley, Chair of Audit Committee, to act as Mentor);**
- (c) **Mrs J Deaville be also appointed as a member of the Audit Committee with effect from 23 April 2010;**
- (d) **Mr P Slater be re-appointed as an Externally Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee with effect from 10 February 2010.**

(c) Audit Committee, 9 March 2010

The Chair of the Committee reported on the key issue considered at this meeting:

Learner Number Assurance

The Committee had considered a report on proposed arrangements for the audit of the College's learner number systems in 2009/10

**It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Audit Committee:**

**KPMG LLP be commissioned to undertake a 5-day audit of the College's learner number systems in 2009/10.**

(d) Resources Committee, 17 March 2010

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, the Vice Principal (Resources) reported on the following issues considered at this meeting:

(i) Tuition and Examination Fee Policy

The Committee had approved the draft Tuition and Examination Fee Policy for 2010/11 which reflected the LSC's increase in its assumed tuition fee contribution to 50% of the funding rate.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the approval by the Resources Committee of the Tuition and Examination Fee Policy for 2010/11 be noted.**

(ii) Treasury Management

The Committee had received an update from College Management on the Treasury Management Policy and practices. Following review by SMT no amendments to the current policy had been recommended.

**It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Resources Committee:**

**the current Treasury Management Policy be approved with no changes.**

#### 1675.0 COLLEGE FINANCIAL HEALTH

The Vice Principal (Resources) reported that the College had received written confirmation from LSC which concurred with the College's self-assessment of its financial health for the year ending 31 July 2009 as 'outstanding.'

Following discussion the Vice Principal (Resources) agreed to investigate the options for publicising the College's excellent financial performance as confirmed by the LSC.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the LSC's confirmation of the College's financial health as outstanding for the year ending 31 July 2009 be noted.**

#### 1676.0 CAPITAL PROJECT

Mr C Riding, Head of Capital Development, reported on developments with the new Capital Project. Following interviews attended by governor representatives, GVA Grimley Limited had been appointed to provide Project Management services for the project while CPMG Limited had been appointed as Project Architects. Appointments for other consultants to take the project to RIBA stage C had been completed by the end of March 2010 in line with the Project timetable.

The forecast profile for the Project was considerably lower than the current approved Project Budget with professional fee costs for the initial stage significantly lower than expected to reflect the current economic downturn. The next major stage in the project would involve seeking Corporation approval in July 2010 to progress to RIBA stage E and Contractor procurement.

College Management had received outline guidance from the LSC and the Skills Funding Agency on the new approval process for capital building projects. The College was expecting to be one of the first in the sector to seek the approval of the Chief Executive of the SFA for its project which would require a finance, property and education case as under the previous scheme.

Following discussion it was suggested and agreed that a meeting of the Accommodation Strategy Working Group (ASWG) be arranged before the end of May to review the project's draft plans. It was further agreed that the draft plans be also presented to the Resources Committee in June prior to consideration by the Corporation in July.

**It was RESOLVED that:**

- (a) the Clerk be requested to arrange a meeting of the ASWG to review the project's draft plans before the end of May;**
- (b) the draft plans be also reviewed at the Resources Committee meeting in June, with all governors invited to attend for this item.**

#### 1677.0 APPLICATIONS 2010/11

The Vice Principal (Resources) presented a report on applications received to date for full time FE courses from September 2010. Overall application levels were currently 17% up on the same time last year with an increased enrolment anticipated in September in line with the growth requested from the LSC.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

#### 1678.0 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

The Vice Principal (Resources) presented the Management Accounts for March 2010 which confirmed a forecast operating position of £492K, £75K ahead of the budget target discounting one-off costs associated with the Capital Project.

Current month variations to forecast included a reduction in the funding forecast in respect of Employer Responsive funding to reflect lower activity levels, to be offset by a reduction in partner payments.

Following discussion the Vice Principal (Resources) confirmed that this year's planned budget surplus was in line with the position outlined in recent three and ten year financial forecasts submitted to the LSC.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the Management Accounts for March 2010 be received.**

*At this point at the recommendation of the Clerk, the Chair agreed that in order to ensure quoracy, Part II agenda items 18 - 21 be taken as the next items of business: minutes 1687.0 - 1690.0 inclusive refer. At the conclusion of these of items of business, the Clerk to the Corporation, Mr G Davies Marshall, Mr J Duggan and Mr I Rigby rejoined the meeting.*

*Mrs H Haroon-Iqbal left the meeting during the next item of business*

#### 1679.0 FUNDING ALLOCATION

The Vice Principal (Resources) reported on the College's funding allocations for 2010/11 from the LSC and its successor bodies. The LSC had allocated the College £13.1 million for 16-18 work, representing a significant increase on the current year. The College's indicative allocation from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for 19+ adult learner responsive work, however, had been considerably reduced compared to the current year with no prospect of achieving growth funding.

Provisional allocations for Employer Responsive work covering Apprenticeships and Train to Gain had been reduced to reflect the College's level of delivery in the context of the current economic downturn. Following an appeal by the College, the LSC had presented a business case to the regional office against the reduction in the Adult Learner Responsive allocation. College Management was reviewing options to address the expected shortfall in adult funding, including an increased offer of full cost recovery provision.

When asked, the Vice Principal (Resources) expressed the view that the Capital Project would not be jeopardised by the funding situation given that contract/consultant costs to date were competitive, while 16-18 funding was expected to remain a government priority area.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

*Cllr D Davis left the meeting during the next item of business*

#### 1680.0 GOVERNOR TRAINING

Mr I Mason and Mr G Davies Marshall reported on their attendance at the AoC/LSIS Annual Governor Conference on 18-19 March 2010. The conference had been generally successful and had provided opportunities for networking with colleagues.

Mr Mason highlighted his attendance at a workshop on the best use of the College site outside the usual teaching times. Following discussion the Vice Principal (Resources) agreed to discuss this issue with SMT and report back to the Corporation.

Mr G Davies Marshall also reported on his attendance at the UCU Staff Governor training event in December 2009.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

#### 1681.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair reported on a workshop he had led at the Annual Governor Conference on the role of governors in an OfSTED Inspection. The workshop had been very successful with good feedback received from participants.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

#### 1682.0 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

In the absence of the Principal the Vice Principal (Resources) highlighted the following developments:

- The College had recently been re-accredited for Investors in People. The Inspector had produced a glowing report which had praised the College as an excellent place of work
- The main candidates for the general election had been invited to attend the College to meet the students for a debate
- The College had received its first payment from the local authority for 16-18 funding under the new arrangements

Following discussion the Vice Principal (Resources) agreed to discuss with the Marketing Unit how to most effectively publicise the College's excellent IIP report.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

#### 1683.0 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk presented his report on issues affecting governance:

- (a) Governor Link Scheme  
At the request of the Chair members reported on Governor Link visits undertaken during the Autumn term.
- (b) Governance Performance Indicators (PIs)  
The Clerk presented the updated Governance PIs and it was noted that attendance at meetings had fallen below the target set. A minor amendment to the PIs was suggested and agreed.
- (c) Committee Standing Orders  
The Clerk reported that the Standing Orders of the Corporation and its Committees had been updated to reflect the demise of the LSC and in line with modified Instrument and Articles of Government.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

#### 1684.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) Visit to Palmbourne Technology Centre  
A member thanked College Management for the tour of the Palmbourne site which had preceded the meeting.
- (b) Social Networks

In response to a query raised by a member, the Vice Principal (Resources) agreed to report back to the next meeting of the Corporation on the use of social networks to support student recruitment.

(c) Training Solutions

The Staff Member (Non-Teaching) drew members' attention to the new newsletter promoting the work of the Training Solutions team.

1685.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 8 July 2010 at 5.30 pm.

1686.0 PART II ITEMS

Under Part II of the agenda members considered the following items of business:

- Part II minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2009
- Part II summary report of the Audit Committee meeting held on 9 March 2010
- Restructuring
- Part II summary report of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 25 February 2010