

STAFFORD COLLEGE CORPORATION

MINUTES of CORPORATION MEETING, 14 JULY 2011

Present: A P Davison (Chair), S Birkin, P Buttery, G M Humby, Miss S Kenny,
I Mason, Mrs J Tanner, S Willis, Mrs V Woodward

In Attendance: J P Charleton (Clerk), T Guest, A Piercy, C Riding, I Rigby

Observer: R Barnett, Prof H Duggal, G Phillips (Burton and South Derbyshire College),
I Starkie

Apologies: M R Bagguley, I Blachford, Mrs J Deaville, Mrs S Green, G Taylor-Marshall,
Cllr M Winnington

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chair presented Governors' Certificates of Merit to a number of students in recognition of their significant achievements during their course of study in the past year.

The Chair welcomed Mr G Phillips, Vice Principal of Burton and South Derbyshire College who was observing the meeting as part of the Central Education Partnership initiative.

PART I

1770.0 MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The Chair reported the resignation of Mrs Haroon Iqbal as an External Member with effect from 6 June 2011.
- (b) The Chair reported the resignation of Dr T Ramgopal as an Associate Member with effect from 31 July 2011.
- (c) The Chair reported the completion of the term of office on 31 July 2011 of Miss S Kenny, Student Member.

The Chair thanked Miss Kenny and in their absence Mrs Haroon Iqbal and Dr Ramgopal for their contribution to the work of the Board during their periods of office.

1771.0 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded members of their duty to declare an interest, financial or otherwise, in any item on the Agenda. Mr G Humby declared that he was an employee of the Sterling Power Group.

1772.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Mt T Guest, Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, presented the draft Single Equality and Diversity Policy for 2011-13 which describes how the College will fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The new Act harmonises previous legislation and requires the College to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation for groups with protected characteristics such as age, disability, gender and race.

While production of the new Policy was a legal requirement, the College welcomed the opportunity to bring together in one document an account of its commitments and actions to celebrate and advance equality of opportunity. As required under the Act the new Policy would be published on the College web-site and intranet with targets and outcomes promoted throughout the College.

Following discussion it was suggested and agreed that the new Policy be amended to include reference to related relevant policies and to detail the existing policies/procedures which the new document would replace.

It was RESOLVED:

that subject to inclusion of the agreed amendments, the College's new Single Equality and Diversity Policy for 2011-13 be approved.

Mr Guest left the meeting at this point.

At this point the Chair agreed that agenda item 5 - The Wolf Review - be considered later in the agenda following item 11.

1773.0 MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 7 APRIL 2011

(a) Part I Minutes

It was RESOLVED:

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

(b) Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

1774.0 SUMMARY REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

(a) Curriculum Standards and Performance Committee, 6 June 2011

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

- The Student Mid-Programme Questionnaire had confirmed the trend for improved student satisfaction compared to national benchmarks.

- A report had been received on the second Learner Voice Conference held in March which had been rated as very successful by students and staff.
- A report had been received on the College's curriculum offer in 2011/12 which while remaining broadly the same as in the current year will include new provision on Countryside Management and a greater focus on apprenticeships.

(b) Audit Committee, 21 June 2011

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

(i) Strategy for Internal Audit 2011/12

The Committee had considered RSM Tenon's draft Internal Audit Strategy and Internal Audit Plan for 2011/12 following discussion with College Management. Minor changes to the Audit Plan had been suggested and agreed to include the number of planned audit days for each review.

It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Audit Committee:

subject to the agreed minor amendments, the Strategy for Internal Audit and the updated Internal Audit Plan for 2011/12 be approved.

(ii) Performance of Internal Audit Service

The Committee had reviewed the performance of the RSM Tenon as IAS provider during 2010/11 using agreed performance indicators. The Committee had concluded that the performance of the IAS during this period had been satisfactory.

It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Audit Committee:

RSM Tenon be re-appointed as IAS provider for 2011/12 at an annual charge of £15,377.

(c) Resources Committee, 29 June 2011

The Chair of the Committee reported on the following issue considered at this meeting, noting that the other key issues in relation to the Capital Project, the draft Budget and the Ten Year Financial Forecast would be considered as separate items later in the agenda.

Accommodation Strategy Working Group (ASWG)

The Committee had considered the revised Standing Orders of the ASWG which had been updated by the Clerk following a recommendation by Internal Audit.

It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Resources Committee:

the updated Standing Orders for the ASWG be approved.

Mr C Riding, Director of Capital Development and MIS, reported on the latest developments with the new Capital Project:

- Connell Bros Limited had completed the demolition to ground slab as contracted to programme and within budget and on schedule.
- The University of Leicester had been awarded the contract to undertake the required archaeological works as specified as a planning condition.
- Connell Bros Limited had been appointed to undertake the ground slab removal and excavation with a three-week contract extension to undertake the works.
- A final contract had been agreed with the preferred main contractor which was within budget and allowed for a contingency element
- The main contractor would commence preliminary work from 18 July with on-site set up from 15 August.

Members welcomed the report and congratulated College Management on the progress made to date with the Capital Project.

It was RESOLVED:

- (a) **that the report be received;**
- (b) **that the successful execution of the Demolition Contract by Connell Brothers Limited be noted.**

At this point the Chair agreed that item 17 on the Capital Project in Part II of the agenda be considered as the next item of business

1776.0 DRAFT BUDGET

The Vice Principal (Resources) presented the initial draft Budget for 2011/12, previously considered by the Resources Committee, with an operating surplus of £153,000, in line with the expected figure in the June 2010 Financial Forecast. The Budget included the Capital Project costs and the impact on the cashflow, balance sheet and associated ratios.

The College had received an average reduction in funding allocations of 3% on 2010/11 funding levels across all Learner and Employer Responsive programmes. Adult and Employer Responsive targets are subject to in-year reconciliations with underperformance resulting in reductions in funding during the financial year.

As part of the budget setting process a risk and sensitivity analysis had been conducted, covering all the main areas of risk and showing the potential impact of alternative scenarios in terms of recruitment, budget cuts and cost increases.

Cash at the bank was forecast to reduce significantly during 2011/12 due to the Capital Project on the assumption that the majority of the loan would be drawn down by the end of July 2012. Sufficient cash reserves were budgeted to offset the risk of a breach of the loan covenants.

In line with AoC pay guidance, a staff pay award of 0.5% had been included in the budget, payable from 1 February 2012.

It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Resources Committee:

- (a) **the initial draft Budget for 2011/12, incorporating both an operating surplus of £153,000 and an Initial Capital Budget of £560,000 be approved;**
- (b) **the College's Financial Health be assessed as 'Satisfactory' for 2011/12 under the Framework for Excellence scoring, based on the new SFA formula.**

1777.0 TEN YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

The Vice Principal (Resources) provided details of the assumptions used in producing the College's Ten Year Financial Forecast for the period 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2021 previously considered by the Resources Committee at its meeting in June 2011, and the proposed outturn position in each year. The Ten-Year Forecast expressed in financial terms the costs of implementing the Plan, identifying the income and expenditure associated with projected levels of activity. The Forecast included projections for inflation and funding body grants, fee income and pay/non-pay expenditure.

Following discussion the Vice Principal (Resources) agreed to provide regular financial reports to the Corporation and Resources Committee which modelled the impact of funding and other changes on the College's financial position and on the bank loan covenants over the next three years.

It was RESOLVED that as recommended by the Resources Committee:

- (a) **the Ten-Year Financial Forecast 2011-2021 be approved for submission to the appropriate funding bodies;**
- (b) **the College's Financial Health be assessed as 'Satisfactory' across the period of the forecast under the Framework for Excellence scoring, based on the new SFA formula.**

1778.0 BURSARY FUND

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented a report on the College's policies for the use of Learner Support funding to give financial help to young people and adults in 2011/12 who face barriers to participation.

The College had received a Bursary Funding allocation of £213K from the YPLA to provide financial help to young people aged 16-18 to replace the national EMA scheme. Given the reduced funding available, the College planned to focus resources on young learners most in need and to prioritise 'in kind' support for course costs such as travel and essential equipment.

As in previous years the College planned to complement national learner support funding by allocating resources from its own budget.

It was RESOLVED:

that the College's policy for the use of Learner Support Funding for Young People and Adults in 2011/12 be approved.

At this point the Chair agreed that since the Chair of the Resources and Remuneration Committee had to leave the meeting early, agenda items 19 and 20 in Part II of the Agenda be considered as the next items of business

1779.0 APPLICATION OF THE CORPORATION SEAL

The Clerk requested approval of the use of the Corporation seal to confirm the following contracts:

- (i) Project Management contract with GVA Grimley Limited
- (ii) M & E Services contract with Couch Perry & Wilkes LLP
- (iii) Quantity Surveyor and CDM Co-ordinator Services contract with AA Projects Limited
- (iv) Section 106 Agreement with Stafford Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council

It was RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Corporation seal be applied to the above contracts;**
- (b) that the application of the Corporation seal for each contract be authenticated by the signature of the Chair of the Corporation and the Principal.**

Mr S Birkin left the meeting at this point and Prof H Duggal left the meeting during discussion on the following item of business

1780.0 WOLF REVIEW

The Principal presented a briefing for members on the findings of the Professor Alison Wolf's Report on 14-19 vocational education and its implications for the College. The Report proposed a number of measures to improve the quality and efficiency of provision and to support young people's progression to the workplace.

Key issues for the College included the following:

- Potential to enrol 14 year-olds directly into the College
- Introduction of resit Maths and English GCSE for those students who fail in school
- Changes to the present work experience programme
- Future of pre-16 vocational education and the role the College would play with partners
- Implications of funding per learner rather than by qualification

Following discussion members agreed that the implications of the report for the educational character of the College be considered at the next Corporation Planning event, when further information would be known on the Government's implementation of the key recommendations.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

1781.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair reported that he would be attending the AoC Conference in November together with the Principal.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

1782.0 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented his report and highlighted the following developments:

- Applications for 2011/12 in all areas except A levels were at the same levels as last year, with good enrolment expected in September.
- A number of high schools in Stafford had applied for Academy status.
- The College had developed a partnership with Walton Hall Special School and planned to use the school's premises to support the delivery of the new Countryside Management courses.
- The work of the new Central Education Partnership was developing, with the Principals in the group having recently met John Hayes and the local MPs at the Houses of Parliament.
- GEC Alstom had recently decided to relocate all of its local apprenticeships to the College.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

Miss S Kenny left the meeting at this point

1783.0 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk presented his report on issues affecting governance:

(a) Composition of the Corporation

The Clerk presented a report on the size of the Board which included a proposal to reduce the determined number of members from 17 to 15 to support the streamlining of the work of the Board.

Following concerns raised by members on the consequences of reducing the number of externally appointed members it was agreed that this proposal needed further detailed work prior to re-consideration by the Corporation.

It was RESOLVED:

that the Search and Governance Committee be requested to give detailed consideration to the proposal to reduce the determined number of members at its meeting in October.

(b) Application for Board Membership

The Clerk reported that in response to a written request from the Corporation, Stafford Borough Council had nominated Cllr P E Jones for membership of the Corporation.

Members considered Cllr Jones' application in relation to the Person Specification for membership previously submitted to the Borough Council.

It was RESOLVED:

that Cllr P E Jones be appointed for a four year term of office as an Associate Governor with effect from 15 July 2011.

(c) Governor Link Scheme

At the request of the Chair members commented on Governor Link visits undertaken during the Autumn term.

In response to a member's query, the Vice Principal (Resources) reported that the remit of the College Sustainability Group had been extended to include consideration of Value for Money in general.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received.

1784.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Planning Training Event:	Thursday 22 September 2011 (<i>further details to be supplied nearer the time</i>)
Ordinary Scheduled Meeting:	Thursday 13 October 2011 at 5.30 pm

1785.0 PART II ITEMS

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

- Part II minutes of the meetings held on 7 April 2011
- Capital Project
- Part II summary reports of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 29 June 2011
- Part II summary report of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on 21 March 2011