

STAFFORD COLLEGE CORPORATION

**MINUTES of  
CORPORATION MEETING, 7 APRIL 2011**

- Present: I Mason (Chair), I Blachford, P Buttery, Mrs S Green, G M Humby,  
Miss S Kenny, Mrs J Tanner, S Willis, Mrs V Woodward
- In Attendance: J P Charleton (Clerk), Ms A Piercy, C Riding, I Rigby
- Observer: R Barnett
- Apologies: M R Bagguley, S Birkin, A P Davison, Mrs J Deaville, Mrs H Haroon-Iqbal,  
I Starkie, G Taylor-Marshall, Cllr M Winnington

**PART I**

1753.0 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 Sterling Power Ltd.

1754.0 MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2010

(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.

1755.0 SUMMARY REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

(a) Curriculum Standards and Performance Committee, 7 March 2011

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

- The Student Induction Questionnaire conducted in October 2010 had confirmed the trend for improved student satisfaction compared to national benchmarks

- The Committee had approved the revised Accessibility Statement and the updated College Charter.

At the request of the Chair the Student Governor (FE) reported on the outcome of the College's second Learner Voice Conference held on 17 March 2011. The event had been very successful with learners and staff engaged in developing ideas to improve communication between the College and its learners.

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) reported that the College had submitted a nomination for a national LSIS award to highlight the success of the Conference in promoting the Learner Voice Strategy.

(b) Audit Committee, 15 March 2011

The Vice Chair of the Committee reported that the Committee had considered a report on proposed arrangements for the audit of the College's learner number systems in 2010/11.

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

**RSM Tenon be requested to undertake a review of the College's learner number systems in 2010/11, using the unallocated days in this year's Internal Audit Plan.**

(c) Search and Governance Committee, 21 March 2011

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

(i) Board Vacancy

Members had been advised that Stafford Borough Council had proposed to nominate a councillor for Board Membership following the May local elections.

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

**(a) the Clerk be requested to write to the Borough Council requesting that a Cabinet Member be nominated for Board Membership;**

**(b) that the Borough Council nomination be approved for Board membership, subject to the nominee meeting the requirements in the approved Person Specification for the vacant position.**

(ii) Committee Vice Chairs

Members had considered the forthcoming vacancies for the Vice Chairmanship of the Audit and Curriculum Standards and Performance Committees with reference to the future skills and development needs of the Board.

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

- (a) **Mrs V Woodward be re-appointed as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee for a two-year term of office with effect from 4 April 2011;**
  - (b) **Mr I Blachford be appointed as Vice Chair of the Curriculum Standards and Performance Committee for a two-year term of office with effect from 4 April 2011.**
- (iii) Election of Staff Members  
Members had considered the draft Procedure for the Election of Staff Members which had been revised by the Clerk in line with sector best practice. Under the revised procedure all College staff will be eligible to be nominated and to vote in future staff governor elections.

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

**the revised Procedure for the Election of Staff Members to the Corporation be approved.**

- (iv) Executive Summary Reports  
Members had considered a report from the Clerk on the use of the Executive Summary template over the past year.

Members had agreed that the Executive Summary template operated effectively by highlighting key issues for governors. Minor amendments to the template were suggested and agreed.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the revised Executive Summary template be approved.**

- (v) Governor Communication  
Members had considered proposals from the Clerk regarding the development of electronic communication with Governors.

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

- (a) **preliminary notices of meetings should be communicated via email, subject to members being able to opt to receive this information by letter;**
- (ii) **a secure governors' only section of the new College extranet be set up.**

(vi) Appointment of Board/Committee Members

The Committee had considered a number of applications for re-appointment to the Corporation, 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) **Mrs H Haroon-Iqbal be re-appointed as an External Member for a two-year term of office with effect from 26 April 2011;**
- (b) **Mr L Glover be re-appointed as an Externally Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee for a four-year term of office with effect from 24 April 2011;**
- (c) **Mr M Bagguley be re-appointed as an external member for a four-year term of office with effect from 9 June 2011.**

(d) Resources Committee, 23 March 2011

The Vice Chair of the Committee reported on the following issues considered at this meeting, noting that items relating to the Capital Project and the Three-Year Financial Forecast would be considered as separate items later in the agenda:

(i) Tuition and Examination Fee Policy

The Committee had approved the draft Tuition and Examination Fee Policy for 2010/11, which had been updated to reflect the funding approach of the SFA and YPLA.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the approval by the Resources Committee of the Tuition and Examination Fee Policy for 2011/12 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.**

1756.0 CAPITAL PROJECT

Mr C Riding, Director of MIS and Capital Development, provided an update on progress with the Capital Project:

(i) Specialist Demolition Contractor

Following a tender process three specialist demolition contractors had been interviewed on 23 March 2011. After interviews of shortlisted companies Connell Brothers Ltd had been recommended for appointment.

On confirmation of appointment the Specialist Demolition Contractor would commence site set up and hoarding during the Easter vacation, with demolition and site clearance planned to take place between 10 to 12 weeks from Easter onwards.

(ii) Main Contractor

Mr Riding tabled a report on the outcome of the tender process for the appointment of the Main Contractor. As part of the OJEU process five contractors had been invited to tender, all of whom having significant experience of constructing new education buildings.

Based on initial tendered submissions, at least three tenders were within the overall project cost plan budgeted allowance for the main contractor appointment. Over the next two weeks the Cost and Project Management Consultants would be working with all the Contractors to review and verify their submissions with a remit to further reduce the tendered sum.

**It was unanimously RESOLVED that:**

- (a) **final approval be given for the Capital Project and for the commencement of demolition of the Workshop & Link Blocks and the Skills Centre;**
- (b) **the appointment of Connell Brothers Ltd as Specialist Demolition Contractor for the Project be confirmed;**
- (c) **the selection of the Main Contractor for the Project be delegated to the Accommodation Strategy Working Group, advised by College Management and the Project Design Team.**

1757.0 THREE-YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST

The Vice Principal (Resources) outlined the key features included in the updated three-year financial forecasts based on the latest information available to the College as presented to the Resources Committee in March. Key assumptions in the revised forecasts included levels of SFA/YPLA income, the rate of inflation, efficiency savings and loan finance costs.

With actual funding allocations for next year better than anticipated, College Management was currently working on the detail of next year's draft budget for presentation to the Resources Committee in June.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

*At this point Mr Riding left the meeting*

#### 1758.0 COLLEGE FINANCIAL HEALTH

The Principal reported that following submission of financial plans for 2010-2013, the College had received a letter from the SFA which confirmed the agency's agreement with the College's self-assessment of its financial health for the year ending 31 July 2010 as 'outstanding.'

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the confirmation by the SFA of the College's financial health as 'outstanding' for the year ending 31 July 2010 be noted.**

#### 1759.0 FUNDING ALLOCATION

The Principal reported on the College's funding allocations for 2011/12 received from the YPLA and the SFA.

The College had received an allocation of £13.5 million from the YPLA for 16-18 work, representing a slight decrease on the previous year but with funding for almost exactly the same number of learners as in the previous year. The national reduction in 16-18 funding had been offset by transitional protection having been included in the allocation for at least a year.

The College's SFA allocation for its adult work including Apprenticeships had increased to £2.8 million, which included an element for job outcomes for programmes for unemployed learners.

Overall the College's funding allocations for 2011/12 had been better than expected, although difficulties were anticipated for the following year in the event that transitional protection is withdrawn, since the College would be aiming to achieve its recruitment targets against the background of a demographic downturn.

While allocations for adult work had remained broadly the same as in the previous year, the College faced a challenge in achieving its targets as a result of changes in the funding methodology including the introduction of outcome related elements.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

#### 1760.0 INTEGRATED QUALITY ENHANCEMENT REVIEW (IQER)

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) tabled a copy of a letter received from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education on the provisional judgements from the IQER summative review of the College's HE provision.

The IQER review had expressed confidence that that the College operates effectively in terms of academic standards and quality of learning opportunities in relation to its higher education provision. It had also concluded that reliance could be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the public information provided by the College on its HE provision.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the report be received.**

1761.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

In the absence of the Chair of the Corporation, no matters were reported under this item of business.

1762.0 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented his report and highlighted the following developments:

- All of the local schools, with the exception of Blessed William Howard, had had discussions regarding Academy status and initial approval to develop an application had been agreed by all governing bodies.
- A new partnership had been formed with Law Training and Chasetown FC where a number of full-time learners will transfer to the College.

*At this point, with the approval of the Chair, consideration was given to a paper previously circulated to members by the Principal on Institute for Learning (IFL) membership charges*

The Principal explained that with membership of the IFL being a statutory responsibility for FE teachers since May 2010, membership fees were no longer payable by the government with the expectation that such charges would be met by individual members of staff.

UCU had written to colleges requesting that they agree to pay the membership for their staff and had warned that a trades dispute would be declared if colleges refused to pay this charge with the possibility of industrial action or an organised boycott of the IFL.

The AoC had provided legal advice to colleges regarding the implications for the employment status of individuals who might cease to be registered with IFL.

**It was RESOLVED:**

- (a) **that the report be received;**
- (b) **that it is the Corporation's position that payment of IFL membership fees is the responsibility of individual members of staff;**
- (c) **that the advice of AoC be followed regarding the employment status of individual members of staff who have not complied with their statutory responsibility to maintain membership of the IFL.**

1763.0 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk presented his report on issues affecting governance:

*At this point Mr I Mason left the meeting and with the approval of members Mr G Humby took the Chair*

(a) Appointment of Vice Chair of the Corporation

The Chair noted that since the current term of office of the Vice Chair of the Corporation would expire on 25 April 2011 it was necessary for members to elect a Vice Chair at this meeting. In response to a written request for nominations from eligible members for the position of Vice Chair, Mr I Mason had expressed his willingness to stand for re-election. No other nominations had been received.

At the request of the Chair, Mr Mason's nomination was proposed by Mrs V Woodward and seconded by Mr P Buttery. Members voted accordingly by a show of hands.

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:**

**that Mr I Mason be re-appointed as Vice Chair of the Corporation for two year term of office until 26 April 2013.**

*At this point Mr Mason re-joined the meeting and took the Chair after thanking members for his re-appointment*

(b) College Mission

The Clerk asked members to ratify the revised College Mission following review by the Corporation at its planning session on 10 February 2011.

**It was RESOLVED:**

**that the revised College Mission and Corporate Aims be approved.**

(c) Governor Training

A member reported on the Staffordshire-wide Governor training event on funding held at Newcastle under Lyme College on 4 April. The event had been successful with useful insight provided for members on key funding issues for the sector.

The Chair and the Clerk reported on their attendance at the recent Annual Governor Conference which had considered a range of issues including excellence in governance.

(d) Code of Governance

The Clerk provided an update on the latest position regarding the AoC's draft Code of Governance. Following feedback from the sector a revised code would be issued for consideration post Easter.

(e) Governor Link Scheme

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

#### 1764.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk requested that members approve the use of the College seal in respect of the College's contract with CPMG Limited as Architects for the Capital Project from RIBA Stage E.

**It was RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Corporation seal be applied to the contract between the College and CPMG Ltd as Architects for the Capital Project from RIBA Stage E;**
- (b) that the application of the Corporation seal be witnessed by the signature of the Vice Chair of the Corporation and the Principal.**

#### 1765.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 14 July 2011 at 5.30 pm.

#### 1766.0 PART II ITEMS

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

- Part II minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 9 December 2010
- Part II summary report of the Resources Committee meeting held on 23 March 2011
- Part II summary report of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 21 March 2011