



# GOVERNORS' MEETING

Minutes of the meeting  
on 12 July 2007

**Present:** Mr Neil Arlett, Ms Amanda Attfield, Ms Michelle Balcombe, Mrs Carol Clapham, Mr Rob Doran, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Mrs Pippa Hadfield, Andrew McDonagh, Mr Rob Soutar (Chair), Mrs Margaret Turner

**In attendance** Dr Ruth Brinton and (Deputy Principal)  
Mr Philip Eyles (Clerk), Mrs Ruth Jones (Finance Director)

**1. Apologies for absence**

Stephen Byatt, Charles Davies, Jenny Gunning, Steve Hancorn, Bob Ing, Heidi Macdougall, Amy Morgan, Ravi Tandon

**2. Declaration of interests and gifts**

For item 9 iv, Rob Soutar declared that he knows Dr Hopkins personally

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2007**

In Minute 7, the current Vice Chair of Governors is actually eligible to serve for three more years, not one. After correcting this error, the Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record and signed

**4. Matters arising from the minutes**

None

**5. Clerk's Report**

i. Impending changes to the Instrument & Articles of Government

The Clerk referred to the circulated sheet which details the changes that are due to come into effect within the next year. One change that can be made before the new rules come into force is the publishing of more information on the College website

ii. Membership of Governors' Committees

Governors who wish to change their committee were asked to contact the Clerk

iii. Resignation of Colin Masterson as Governor

Colin Masterson resigned with effect from 3 July

**6. Principal's Report**

The report detailed changes in staffing, plans for the next Accommodation Strategy and Retention Data. The latter showed a significant improvement in retention on the AS Level course but little change in the already high retention on the A2 and GCSE courses. Information was given on the consultation and feasibility stage of the Wyebriidge Academy

There was brief discussion of the way the Department for Education and Skills is to be divided in 2009. It is certain that the College will be involved with both new departments but many details have yet to emerge.

The Principal explained how, under the Government's new Framework for Excellence, each college will be given an Overall Performance Rating (sometimes called a 'star rating') based upon its Responsiveness, Effectiveness and Finance. In the past, Ofsted merely reported on effectiveness. The College will be a pilot for the new framework in 2007-08.

**7. Election of Chair and Vice Chair of Governors for academic year 2007-08**

The current Chair and Vice Chair left the room during this item. It was proposed by Neil Arlett that Rob Soutar be elected Chair and by Michelle Balcombe that Amanda Attfield be elected Vice Chair. Both were seconded by Andrew McDonagh. There were no other nominations and they were unanimously elected

## 8. Annual Provider Plan 2007-08

Following the Governors' approval of the Annual Provider Plan at its May 2007 meeting, the Learning & Skills Council had requested further details which are contained within the amended plan.

After brief discussion, the Amended Provider Plan 2007-08 was **APPROVED**

## 9. Committee Reports

### i. Staffing Committee on 27 June

Governors welcomed the relatively high percentage of budget (1%) devoted to staff development, compared with other colleges. Satisfaction was expressed regarding the Committee's handling of the Annual Child Protection Report under its delegated powers. Following these and other discussions, the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- Appraisal Policy and Procedures 2007-08
- Pay Policy and Procedures 2007-08
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2007-08

It was also **AGREED** that the Committee's Minutes be **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**, subject to changing 2007/07 to 2006/07 in Minute 6

### ii. Audit Committee on 3 July

The Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE** the following reports from the College's internal audit service:

- *follow-up reviews* covering Corporate Governance, Income and Debtors, Deployment of Academic Staff, General Ledger and Budgetary Control
- *fresh reviews* covering Information Security Management, Personnel and Key Financial Controls

It was **NOTED** that, in the Auditors' opinion, the implementation of the follow-up reports is *reasonable* and that the fresh reviews *provide substantial assurance* that material risks are adequately managed and controlled

Following discussions and the Committee's recommendations, the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the Value for Money Annual Report
- Value for Money Policy and Procedures 2007-08
- Risk Management Annual Report 2006-07
- Risk Management Summary and Action Plan, which is derived from the July 2007 Risk Register Analysis
- Risk Management Policy and Procedures 2007-08
- Reappointment of Bentley-Jennison as internal auditors for 2007-08
- Revised Letters of engagement for Baker Tilly, Financial Statements Auditors.
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It was also **AGREED** that the Committee's Minutes be **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

### iii. Finance & Premises Committee on 5 July

Following discussion, during which the projected surpluses for the next three years were noted, the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- The Draft Budget 2007-08 and Financial Forecast to 2012
- Management Accounts (April and May)

The Governing Body endorsed the Committee's approval of the Health & Safety Report. On insurance, there was a short debate about whether terrorism insurance should be included. There was also discussion of the proposal that insurance would be cheaper if a five-year contract were negotiated

Following these discussions, the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the schedule of insurances, *excluding insurance against terrorism*

- the negotiation of a five-year contract on insurance, with the option by either party to end it or vary it after three years

It was also **AGREED** that the Committee's minutes be **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

iv Search Committee on 12 July

A verbal report was given, with a written report to be considered at the October Governors' Meeting. Governors were given details of Dr K. Hopkins, who is a prospective Governor to replace Colin Masterson (see Minute 5iii). The Search Committee intends to nominate Dr Hopkins for election as a Governor at the October Governors' Meeting.

The Committee is concerned about the loss of financial expertise following Colin Masterson's resignation and intends to place an advertisement seeking people with these skills. Those selected would be co-opted onto Governors' Committees or, subject to vacancies, be considered as prospective Governors.

The Committee had discussed the post of Chair of Governors from the summer of 2008, since Rob Soutar will then no longer be eligible for re-election. All Governors were asked to consider carefully whether they would wish to serve as Chair and asked to give an indication of this to the Clerk by December. The aim is to be able to assure the Board in good time that there is at least one candidate.

**10. Calendar of Governors' meetings and Committee Meetings, 2007-08**

The proposed calendar of meetings was **APPROVED**, subject to moving the Finance & Premises Meeting from 20 September to Monday 1 October

**11. Any other business**

No complaints against the Corporation or Clerk had been received during the past year. The Chair of Governors has examined the file of complaints against the College and reported that all eight were dealt with properly by the Principal. The most serious allegation was that students had been subject to the risk of injury during dance lessons because there is no sprung floor. However, analysis of the College's accident log had given no support to the complaint

**12. Date of next meeting**

7.30pm on Thursday 4 October. There will be no preceding Governors' Workshop