



# GOVERNORS' MEETING

## Minutes of the meeting on 10 July 2008

**Present:** Mr Neil Arlett, Ms Michelle Balcombe, Mrs Carol Clapham, Mr Charles Davies, Mr Rob Doran, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Mrs Pippa Hadfield, Mr Denis Holly, Dr Ken Hopkins, Mr Bob Ing, Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mr Andrew McDonagh, Mr Rob Soutar (Chair), Mr Ravi Tandon, Mrs Margaret Turner

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

*[The meeting was preceded by Governors' Training on the College's Disaster Recovery Plan]*

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Steve Hancorn, Amy Morgan, Emily Marshall, Amy Morgan and Peter Cooper (Deputy Principal)

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS**

None

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MAY 2008**

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record and signed

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute 8: the Chair of Governors has now spoken to College staff to congratulate them on their outstanding performance

**5. CLERK'S REPORT**

The terms of office of both Staff Governors expire in mid-October, so a staff election will take place next term. Two Independent Governors are retiring as their terms of office expire, but three others whose terms are about to expire seek re-election to the Board. The Search Committee will meet soon to consider whether to nominate the latter for re-election and also how to deal with current vacancies and the poor attendance at Governors' Meetings of Amy Morgan.

Governors were asked to speak to the Clerk if they wish to serve on a different committee from September

**6. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2008-09**

Following an indicative secret ballot, only one candidate, Dr. Ken Hopkins, was proposed for the post of Chair of Governors. He was proposed by Denis Holly, seconded by Michelle Balcombe, and elected unanimously, to begin office on 18 July 2008.

There was also only one candidate for the post of Vice Chair: Mrs Heidi Macdougall was elected unanimously to take up office with immediate effect

**7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal began his report with thanks to the retiring Chair, Rob Soutar, who had served the Board for 20 years, the last 8 of them as Chair. He also expressed appreciation for the work of Amanda Atfield, the retiring Vice Chair, and retiring staff

The Principal's report also covered:

- Projected student enrolment
- Attendance – still good but slightly lower than the last two years
- Finance – including projected surpluses for the next four years
- Sports Field Building planning update
- Local news –14-19 Consortium and press coverage of Wyebridge College
- National issues – Machinery of Government, Sixth Form Colleges Forum and Framework for Excellence

The Principal's report was **NOTED**

**8. MONITORING THE 2008 OPERATIONAL PLAN**

The Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE** the report, in which only one objective had not been achieved. This concerned the Physical Access Survey, for which all major issues have been addressed, although some minor ones remain

**9. CALENDAR OF GOVERNING BODY AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Calendar, with provisional list of agenda items for all meetings, was **APPROVED**.

**10. COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CORPORATION 2007-08**

None has been received

**11. REVIEW OF RESPONSES TO COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE COLLEGE**

The Chair of Governors, who had examined the file of complaints received by the Principal during the academic year, reported that all complaints had been dealt with appropriately

**12. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

i. Staff and Students Committee on 25 June

Following a brief discussion, the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE** the College's

- Pay Policy and Procedures 2008-09
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2008-09
- Revised Appraisal and Performance Review Policy and Procedures 2008-09

The Governing Body also **ENDORSED** the Committee's **APPROVAL** of the Annual Child Protection Report under its delegated powers

Subject to changing the budget for staff pay from 3% to 2.7% in Committee Minute 7, the Committee's Minutes were **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

ii. Audit Committee on 1 July

After discussion, the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- Internal Audit Progress report, summarising all recent audit work and assurances
- Internal Audit Report tracking all 2007-08 audit responses
- Risk Management Policy and Procedures 2008-09
- Risk Management Action Plan for 2008-09
- Value for Money Policy and Procedures 2008-09
- Quality Assurance Strategy, Policy and Procedures 2008-09

The Committee's Minutes were **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

iii. Finance and Premises Committee on 3 July

After brief discussions, the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- Monthly Management Accounts for May

- Health & Safety Policy and Procedures 2008-09

There followed discussion of the Budget and Financial Forecast, which include the effects of the proposed Capital Scheme. Reference was also made to the need to pay some staff through timesheets. The Governing Body then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the

- Budget 2008-09
- Financial Forecast to 2013

There then followed a lengthy discussion of the proposed Capital Project Bid for a new building and improved sports facilities at the north end of the site. Planning permission has been given, subject to the production of another Green Transport Plan and discussions with local residents. Tenders have been received and the lowest two are now being scrutinised. The Finance Director then gave the Board a detailed presentation.

The scheme was supported in principle, but serious concerns were expressed about the consequences in the next few years of either a low contribution from the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) or of a very large loan

Subject to an upper limit of external borrowing of £750 000, the Governing Body **AGREED** to

- give the scheme its informed consent
- give delegated powers to the Chair of Governors (Dr Ken Hopkins) and one or other of the Joint Chairs of the Finance & Premises Committee, acting together, to authorise the detailed Capital Project Bid to go forward to the Learning & Skills Council for its approval

Once the contribution from the Learning & Skills Council is known, the Governing Body will re-examine the scheme to decide whether it can still be supported. This may entail the calling of a special Governors' Meeting

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 9 October at 7.30 pm