



GOVERNORS' MEETING

Minutes of the meeting

4 February 2010

Present: Mr Neil Arlett, Michelle Balcombe, Mrs Katarina Blair, Mrs Carol Clapham, Mrs Pat Gaze, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Mr Denis Holly, Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair), Mr Bob Ing, Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mrs Helen Powers, Mr John Pratt, Miss Christine Wright (13)

In attendance: Dr Ruth Brinton and Mr Peter Cooper (Deputy Principals), Mr Philip Eyles (Clerk), Mrs Ruth Jones (Finance Director)

[The meeting was preceded by a further Induction Session and Training for recently appointed Governors]

1. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

Charles Davies, Rob Doran, Andrew McDonagh, James Miller, Patrick Morgan, Ravi Tandon (6)

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

The Principal and Estates Manager had each received a bottle of wine at Christmas from an Estate Agent

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2009

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

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

5. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that Sam Tyler, the second year Student Governor's attendance had been very low. It was agreed that the Deputy Principal (Staff and Students) would see him to discuss the issue.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal informed the Board of Governor James Miller's disabling back injury. The Board joined the Principal in sending James its best wishes.

Forthcoming further changes to the Instrument & Articles of Government were discussed, but only in outline because the sixth form colleges' version has not yet been received. The Report also covered leavers' destinations (similar to those in previous years), Oxford and Cambridge university applications, finance and funding (for discussion of this, see Minute 9iii) and Quality Assurance

The latter focused on the January 2010 Performance Tables ('League Tables') published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DSCF). As in previous years, the College headed the county performance table for Average points per student and Contextualised Value added, but two schools were ahead of the College in average points per exam entry. Nevertheless, on the latter measure, the College beat the local authority average, the local Learning & Skills Council Area average and the all-England average

7. MONITORING THE 2009 OPERATIONAL PLAN

99.5% of objectives had been achieved within 2009 and the remainder will be done in 2010.

The Board **NOTED** the Operational Plan Monitoring Report

8. **MISSION STATEMENT, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC PLAN TO 2013**

The Mission Statement and the Strategic Objectives that derive from them were discussed at length. This Mission Statement is reviewed annually. There was particular emphasis on the key strategic issues and associated risks, including the performance management role of the Local Authority, the impact of falling rolls, progression from the new Diplomas and possible changes to the funding methodology.

The summary of proposed developments was discussed, including marketing the College to students from all backgrounds and re-housing the recently formed 'Well-being' centre, which provides medical and other services

The Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the Mission Statement
- the Strategic Objectives 2011-12 to 2012-13
- the Strategic Plan 2011-12 to 2012-13

9. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

i. Staff & Students Committee on 20 January

The Committee had discussed the nationally negotiated pay award for all non-senior post holder employees of the College and had recommended it to the Board for adoption.

It had also analysed and discussed the audit of Governors' Skills & Training Needs and had recommended a session at the Governors' Conference to meet those needs. One new and important focus for Governors is that of Safeguarding. For the first time, the Committee scrutinised the annual accounts of the Student Representative Council (SRC). The Committee felt that the accounts were useful but also that further clarification is required. These annual accounts will now be reconsidered at the Committee's 30 June meeting. By then the SRC will have considered whether it still wishes to be affiliated to the National Union of Students and the Chair of the Committee will have had clarification from College Staff on the financial operation of the SRC.

The Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the adoption of the nationally negotiated pay award, which will increase all non-senior post holders' pay by 1.5% from September 2009, rising to 2.3% with effect from 1 April 2010
- the Governors' Conference programme

The Committee's Minutes were also considered and **APPROVED**

ii. Curriculum Committee on 20 January

The Committee had considered in detail an analysis of recent students' retention and attendance. Though still at the SFC average, there was some concern expressed about a recent 0.8% drop in attendance compared with 2008. College management is addressing this concern through a range of measures including a proposed revised departmental attendance target. It was proposed that departmental attendance targets are raised, so that now all courses should target 95% attendance and maintain over 90% as a minimum.

The Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Committee's recommendations

- to adopt the new departmental target for attendance, as detailed above
- to retain the previous departmental targets for achievement and retention, unchanged from 2008-09

The Committees Minutes were also considered and **APPROVED**, subject to changing “below 90% attendance as a minimum” to “over 90% attendance as a minimum”.

iii. Finance & Premises Committee on 26 January

After a brief discussion, the Board **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Monthly Management Accounts for November and December 2009. The College’s healthy financial condition continues and the accounts were straightforward.

There was a more extended discussion of the Mid-year Review of the Financial Forecast, which had shown that funding would fall by £469 000 if the Learning & Skills Council imposes cuts on three possible fronts, as detailed within the review. Various mitigating actions are possible to deal with such cuts. However, since the Committee’s meeting, the College has been told that only one of the three types of cut is likely, so the Committee hopes to report more positively from its next meeting. The Midyear Review was **NOTED**.

The Committee had considered in detail revised Financial Regulations and an entirely new Procurement Policy which had been proposed by the Finance Director. The Financial Regulations had last been revised in 2006, but had needed revision to introduce new terminology, increase financial limits for authorisations and to introduce the use of College Credit and Procurement Cards.

After discussion, the Board of Governors **AGREED TO ADOPT**

- the revised Financial Regulations 2009-10, including the use of College Credit and Procurement Cards
- the entirely new Procurement Policy 2009-10

The Committee’s Minutes were also considered and **APPROVED**

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9am on Saturday 27 March, at the Pengethley Manor Hotel