

## HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held on 13 May 2011 at 1600 hrs.

<b>Present</b>	Sultan Ali	Phil Chadwick	Robert Clegg (Chairman)
	Cheryl Eastwood	Linda Feerick	Daryell Grahame
	Karen Harris	Anne Holt	Dennis Payne
	Clive Reid	Clint Street	Derek O'Toole (Principal)
<b>In Attendance</b>	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	John Spindler (VP (F&CD))	
<b>Apologies</b>	James Gallagher  Alun Morgan	Vanda Hagan	Huw Morris

### 33/10 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and no interests were declared.

### 34/10 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

- a. The Minutes of the meeting held on the 3 March 2011 were confirmed and signed.
- b. It was agreed to consider as urgent business:
  - (i) the corporation composition; and
  - (ii) the RMBC Children's Plan.

### 35/10 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

### 36/10 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS (UNCONFIRMED)

- a. ED Committee. (29 March 2011). re 19/10. Alun Morgan's resignation from the Committee was noted, decisions were also noted and endorsed; the minutes were received.
- b. Standards Committee. (29 March 2011). re 13/10. The Chairman's appointment as the Animal Care Focus Governor was noted and the minutes were received.
- c. Audit Committee. (7 April 2011) (the statement following 16/10 was superfluous and would be removed). Alun Morgan's resignation from the Committee was noted and the minutes were then received. Committee membership would be considered under 40/10.
- d. E&F Committee. (7 April 2011). The following points were considered and the minutes were received:
  - (i) re 28/10c. Capital. The Committee had recommended that additional funding was provided for 2 ICT Projects (HR Software c£20k p.a. and VLE c£30kp.a.) and that was agreed;
  - (ii) re 27/10d. Rochdale Refurbishment. The progress was noted.
  - (iii) re 30/10. Tuition fees. Changes to the Tuition Fee Policy would be considered at 38/10e.

- a. **The minutes were received.**

**b. Additional funding for 2 capital projects was approved.**

**37/10 EXECUTIVE REPORT (Curriculum & Quality)**

- a. Equality and Diversity. The Equality and Diversity Report was considered and discussed, it reflected the close attention and positive profile that was given across the college to this area. Strong progress had been made over the last 12 months reflecting the good work of the Equality and Diversity Officer who had been appointed c12 months ago. The comprehensive and clearly written report was welcomed by members who found the information extremely valuable as an indicator of their progressive attitude to the issues, of particular assurance were the outcomes of the Equality Impact Assessments (members completed equality diversity monitoring forms). The SAR outcome was noted and the strengths and areas for improvement were noted. Activities throughout the year were noted and the survey results were fully discussed. The Summary Guide to the Single Equality Scheme was unanimously welcomed and the high standard again welcomed, it was agreed that this area was well served by the incumbent and thanks were recorded.
- b. Safeguarding. It had not been possible to circulate the Safeguarding Report with the main papers and it had been issued as a separately bound supplementary item. The comprehensive report was closely considered and all agreed that the information was of great value. All sections were considered individually and assurances were forthcoming to raised challenges; the Corporation took comfort from the positive tone of the report and referrals to date were discussed by category.

**The information was received.**

**38/10 EXECUTIVE REPORT (VP (F&CD))**

- a. General. The Finance Report accurate to 28 February had scrutinized and discussed in detail by the E&F Committee and the minutes had been discussed at 36/10a. The current surplus stood at c£2.3m against a forecast c£1.17k a favourable variance of c£1.14k. YTD income was c£15.53m (profiled evenly across the year) £174k below expectations due to lower than expected 14-16 recruitment. YTD expenditure was c£13.2m, a positive variance of c£1.3m. The graphical information been studied and discussed and the general considerations were explained. Key PIs were noted.
- b. Luis Michael Training (LMT). The E&F Committee had spent some time considering a serious situation with a sub-contractor and a full briefing was given; LMT had contracted to provide sports apprenticeships and it had become increasingly difficult, since summer 2010, to obtain the necessary documentation (108 students). It had recently become apparent that other colleges and one in particular (Sparsholt), were having similar difficulties; Eversheds were dealing with LMT under HH instructions and may take instruction from the other affected colleges and act for all. There were 8 colleges involved in the situation with various levels of commitment, it was understood that HH ranked 6/8, with c£300k committed during 2009/10 although exposure for the current year will be mitigated by additional in-year activity. The SFA had now informed that funds paid to LMT would be clawed back and they had been requested to allow an extended period for this. LMT had been appointed after the approved and stringent local due diligence process had been exercised, there was no requirement to follow any further procedure and there was no guidance from any higher agency; in view of this it was agreed to check on liability with Eversheds. The information was fully discussed and it was agreed, after robust challenges that all possible safeguards had been taken and regrettably it appeared that a contract, let in good faith, had transpired as flawed.
- c. Funding Allocations/BTP. Details of funding allocations and comparative figures from 2010/had also been discussed by the committee together with plans to deal with a net reduction of c£653k, reassurance was given that implementation of the Business Transformation Programme (BTP) would allow that to be absorbed. The funding reductions had been accurately predicted in the BTP which was now under consultation with staff. Some 30 staff had indicated that they would take voluntary redundancies, with more willing to accept compulsory terms, leaving a rump of approximately 25 to be compulsorily redundant.

- d. HR Report. The HR report was necessarily brief since the HR department were extremely busy with the BTP. The full review of policies and procedures continued and consultation was in progress on the Performance Management System. Full consultation also continued regarding the implementation of the BTP. The continued reduction in grievances and disciplinaries was noted and welcomed. Staff sickness levels continued to vary across departments the average across the college, determined by the improved data system, showed a total cross-college absence of 3.64% (Long term 2.44% and short term 1.21), an improvement in all 3 areas. The Corporation requested thanks be conveyed to Caroline Street for the considerable improvement in HR performance.
- e. Tuition Fees. All fee remission criteria for each area of provision were individually considered and discussed and it was noted that the Registration Fee had been increased to £20, which had been accepted as reasonable by students. The payment and refund options were explained in detail, were noted and the Policy was approved.
  - a. **The information was received.**
  - b. **The LMT situation was noted and Evershed's opinion would be sought on residual liability.**
  - c. **The Tuition Fee Policy was approved.**

#### **39/10 CORPORATION SAR/SKILLS AUDIT**

- a. SAR. The extended evaluation of corporation performance had now been completed and the data was discussed. The recommended Governance assessment of Grade 1 "Outstanding" was considered at length and challenged; it was seductive to claim that the combination of the enhanced self-assessment and skills data together with the improved FMCE grading justified such a grading but there were some areas that could dilute that argument. Foremost were the attendance figures and of these in particular the Corporation figure of 70%, there was a body of opinion that notwithstanding this the decisions taken could be shown as reasoned and well considered and that the monitoring of performance had all been completed as required and this was discussed at some length. The reasons for absence were understood, all members were volunteers and some could not attend all meetings because of work or family commitments but their input was valued and a compromise between attendance and membership had to be reached in such cases. Furthermore members attended many other functions, for example, Curriculum Focus Lunches, Graduation Ceremonies and UPS passing out parades and perhaps some form of recognition of those attendances should be maintained. It was agreed however that, regrettably, attendance levels could not justify the recommended assessment and consequently the Corporation self-assessed grade was agreed as a solid Grade 2 "Good".
- b. Skills. The skills audit in isolation together with the ethnicity balance data would be used by the Search Committee to inform their next meeting which would consider the filling of 2 vacancies (see 40/10a (i)).
  - a. **The Corporation SAR grade for 2010/11 was "Good".**
  - b. **The Search Committee would meet in the near future to consider the vacancies.**

#### **40/10 URGENT BUSINESS**

- a. Corporation Composition. Composition of the Corporation was currently 17 members, 12 general, 2 elected staff, 2 elected students and the Principal, (confirmed at 08/10a) and that membership was reaffirmed. Attendance had been considered in 39/10 however there were 2 issues to be considered under this item.
  - (i) Alun Morgan. Because of personal circumstances Alun had recently resigned from all committee memberships, for some time it had become apparent that he had been having difficulty in regular attendance and this may have influenced the decision. It had been over 6 months since had had been present (Instrument 10 (2) (b) refers) at a Corporation meeting and acceptance of apologies did not condone absence; after full discussion, it was unanimously agreed regrettably that his

membership should be closed immediately with grateful thanks for his valuable contribution; the Clerk would action. A Search Committee meeting would be called to consider the vacancies.

- (ii) Audit Committee. As a result of Alun Morgan's resignation Audit Committee membership had now been reduced to 3 members and it was agreed that Ann Holt and Phil Chadwick would become members.
- b. RMBC Children's Plan. The RMBC Children's Plan was now completed and individual copies would be available on request.
- a. **Corporation Composition was confirmed as 17.**
- b. **Alun Morgan's membership would be closed with thanks for his contribution.**
- c. **Phil Chadwick and Ann Holt would join the Audit Committee.**
- d. **The information was noted**

**50/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be at 1700 on 14 July 2011.