

## HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held on 3 March 2011 at 1700 hrs.

<b>Present</b>	Sultan Ali	Phil Chadwick	Robert Clegg (Chairman)
	Cheryl Eastwood (Items 24-29/10 only)	Linda Feerick	James Gallagher
	Daryell Grahame	Vanda Hagan	Ann Holt
	Huw Morris (Item 29/10 on)	Clive Reid	Clint Street
	Derek O'Toole (Principal)		
<b>In Attendance</b>	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Janet Meenaghan (VP (C&S))	John Spindler (VP(F&CD))
<b>Apologies</b>	Karen Harris	Alun Morgan	Dennis Payne

**The Chairman welcomed Cheryl Eastwood to the Corporation and all introduced themselves. Cheryl apologised that a previously booked appointment would unavoidably limit her time at this meeting.**

### **24/10 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 Clint Street declared an interest in Item 8a (related by marriage to the subject).

### **25/10 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS**

- a. re 14/10 c (ii) Search Committee Minutes. Jim Gallagher had also been reappointed for 4 years and that statement was added; the Minutes of the regular meeting held on the 9 December 2010 were then confirmed and signed.
- b. The Minutes of the special (Confidential) meeting held on 17 February 2011 were declared no longer confidential and were confirmed and signed.
- c. There was no urgent business requested.

### **26/10 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- a. There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- b. There was no urgent business.

### **27/10 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS (UNCONFIRMED)**

- a. EDC. (9 December 2010). The minutes were received.
- b. E&F Committee. (9 December 2010 & 17 February 2010). The minutes were received. Minute 21/10a&b were declared no longer confidential and the content was noted.
- c. Remuneration Committee (20 January 2011). The minutes of the Remuneration Committee were confidential and were available by application to the Clerk; SPH salary agreements had been reached.

- a. **The minutes were received.**
- b. **E&F Minute 21/10 a&b was noted and the action was endorsed.**

## **28/10 PRINCIPALS REPORT**

- a. EMA. The report detailed recent national and local developments. Despite strong lobbying from colleges and the AoC, the EMA would be replaced by a Discretionary Support Fund targeted at those in "greatest need" in a strictly prioritised order and, nationwide, totalling only 10% of the EMA allocation; 78% of 16-18 local learners were in receipt of the EMA. Concern was expressed over the effect on those students concerned and the consequences for retention; however enrolment of 3000 students remained the target.
- b. The Education Bill, incorporating the proposals detailed in the Schools White Paper, had now had the first reading; the main components had been considered before but were reiterated and further discussed item by item. The paper included the power to search students without consent and assurances were given that this would not be generally adopted. The Secretary of State for Education had commissioned Professor Alison Wolf of King's College London review vocational education and how such education for 14- to 19-year-olds could be improved in order to promote successful progression into the labour market, into HE and other training routes. She was also asked to provide practical recommendations to help inform future policy direction, taking into account current financial constraints. That report had been published today and the Corporation would be kept informed.
- c. Modernising Public Services. The Prime Minister had recently explained plans for the modernisation of public services by increasing competition, choice and greater independence. The plan to achieve this was detailed and discussed item by item.
- d. Partnerships. Arrangements for greater collaboration with The Manchester College and The Oldham College were now at an advanced stage. All members would remain absolutely independent and the plans did not envisage or include any moves towards merging but were designed to facilitate sharing of planning and services as listed in the accompanying paper, for example from the start of academic year 2012/13 there would be a unified HE Curriculum across the 3 colleges. A partnership Board had been established (Heads of terms attached) and a working party met each month, this would lead to agreement of a formal Memorandum of Understanding and subsequent public release of the plans. Consideration of the collaboration would be included in the May strategic planning day when partner representatives may be present.

**The information was received.**

**Huw Morris joined the meeting.**

## **29/10 EXECUTIVE REPORT (VP(C&S))**

Curriculum and Quality Report. An update was given on progress towards the targets agreed the previous December. The in-year retention rate, (January 95%) was on track to be met despite an expected fall back. Attendance was below target at 84/95% and focus was maintained of improvement, the reasons why this had not adversely affected retention were currently being examined. Lesson observations (Good or better) at 77/80% were disappointing and that performance must be driven up to at least the target of 80% by the time of the expected inspection. It was accepted that this figure was affected inordinately by standard of those observed. The Safeguarding Policy had now been completely reviewed and agreed by the SMT and after discussion was approved and endorsed. The Professional Guidelines Policy had been developed by a working party and had already been considered by the E&F Committee which had welcomed it as a comprehensive and clear tool for all concerned. The drive for growth to mitigate the effect of the funding reductions was then considered in detail strand by strand, it was important that the pricing policy for courses offered in competition with other local agencies remained realistic although some agencies appeared to be offering "Loss leader" fees.

**Cheryl Eastwood apologised and left the meeting.**

Performance against the FFE framework had now been published and the data was considered. The data was considerably out of date and showed middle to high rating for Learner Destinations and Views but only mid to low rating when performance by course was considered. This gave a false impression

because of the old data; current performance indicated a considerably better picture, which would emerge next year, as the best post 16 local provider.

**The information was received.**

**30/10 EXECUTIVE REPORT (VP (F&CD))**

a. Finance Report. The Finance Report accurate to 31 December had been scrutinized and discussed in detail by the E&F Committee. The current surplus stood at £1.55m against a forecast £1.11k a favourable variance of £439k. YTD income was £11,2m £76k above expectations, whilst YTD expenditure was £363k to the good, mainly because of a lower level of pay award, unfilled posts and lower than expected franchise payments; the latter would be self-correcting over the next few months. All other variations were noted as fully attributable and were analyzed and discussed, in particular the level of exam fees were some 10% higher than others locally and the Boards had been approached with a view to reducing them to the same level. There were some confidential issues, which were detailed separately. The graphical information was then studied and discussed. Key PIs were then also considered, noted and discussed.

(i) Property Strategy. The EDC had recommended the start of the development phase of the Rochdale campus capital works and it the E&F Committee had agreed expenditure (up to a maximum of £120k (gross of VAT)), they had noted that to date £80k had been expended. The Committee had reiterated that no further expenditure would be committed until firm and binding agreement had been reached with RMBC and those decisions were noted and endorsed.

(ii) Funding Allocations. Funding allocations for 2011/12 had been considered and a reduction of £1m, largely as a reduction in entitlement funding from 114 to 30 hours per learner, had been noted with concern; that also was endorsed.

(iii) Consumer Credit Act (CCA). It had been agreed to register under the CCA to facilitate alternative and more favourable student fees payment plans; this was noted and endorsed.

b. (Clint Street had declared an interest in this item; he was not required to withdraw but did not participate in discussion). The HR Report which would inform the annual report to the Corporation had been discussed in detail by each paragraph in the E&F Committee and was considered. The SMT had recently completed a 360 degree appraisal which had informed their annual performance reviews. 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 5.74% (Long term 3.86% and short term 1.885), it was noted that 90 staff members had individually been absent for 4% of their time and 73 had been absent at least 3 times during the year. The ET case prompted by the efficiency programme had now been settled and the associated payment of £2750 was noted. Considerable work had been completed on the Professional Guidelines for all staff, which had been considered, the document aimed to clarify expected professional standards taking account of all current legislation and best practice. It was agreed as a clear, helpful and comprehensive document which was approved with appreciation recorded for the work involved.

**a. The information was received.**

**b. All recommendations/approvals were endorsed**

**31/10 URGENT BUSINESS**

There had been no urgent business agreed.

**32/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be at 1600 on 13 May (strategic planning session).