

HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held on Thursday 14 December 2006 at 1700hrs.

Present	Robert Clegg (Chair)	Paul Harness	Derek O'Toole
	Les Davies	Barbara Davison	Mohammed Naeem
	Terry Piggott (14/06 on)	Clive Reid	Caroline Taylor
	Henry West (Vice-Chair)		
In Attendance	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Margaret Kingsford (Exec Dir T&L)	David Mayall (Exec Dir FP&HR)
Apologies	Julian Parrett	Terry Piggott (Late)	Clint Street
	Zahir Siddique		

The Assistant Clerk had been on sick leave for around 2 weeks and so some papers for the meeting had been despatched later than normal and some would have to be tabled. The Clerk apologised for the inconvenience.

10/06 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.

11/06 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2006

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2006 were confirmed and signed.

12/06 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES AND NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

- a. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.
- b. It was agreed to consider one item of urgent business. (Exec Dir FP&HR)

13/06 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- a. E&F Committee (6 July 2006); the minutes were noted.
- b. HAS Advisory Group (13 September 2006); some concern was expressed regarding the decision (since DDA work was completed) to disband the Disabled Access Working Group. The issue was discussed at length, agreed as a management matter with strong reassurance that disability issues would continue to feature as a priority in Equality and Diversity Committee business and that the transfer of responsibility was to focus like matters to an appropriate forum. Several issues concerning access to, and inefficient and climate unfriendly heating and ventilation services in the Henry West building were then discussed. All such issues would, as a matter of course, feature at an early stage in planning of any new building projects
- c. Academic Board (6 October 2006). The latest version of the I&A removed the statutory requirement for an academic board and discussions were in progress whether or not to discontinue and/or replace with another staff forum. The Corporation would be kept informed on progress of the considerations.

- d. E&F Committee (19 October 2006) (confirmed); the minutes were noted.
- e. E&F Committee (16 November 2006); the minutes were noted.
- f. QAG Minutes (24 November 2006); the minutes were noted. AAV issues would be considered at Item 14/06; comments were noted re the SAR also further considered at 14/06. It was agreed that the group provided a valuable forum for consideration of curriculum focused issues.
- g. Audit Committee (6 December 2006). The minutes were noted, particular note was taken of 14/06 which would inform Item 16/06.

14/06 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- a. AAV. The formal post AAV letter had now been received from OfSTED. The tone was positive with particular emphasis on the quality of management leading to improvement in performance of key skills provision and of MIS data accuracy, both of which had previously shown some weakness. Overall it had been a good visit and the report indicated that the risk level would remain at 2 (good) and that the target date for the next full inspection would remain unchanged although the scope would be more rigorous. The formal letter was at Annex A.
- b. LSC Contract. It was noted that 16-18 enrolments were currently over agreed targets and that overall over-achievement was likely; there may be some additional funding available but the possibility of unfunded provision (particularly in the 19+ cohort) remained strong and this was accepted, in the short term, since discontinuance could adversely affect local perception. The issue however would need deeper analysis since future free provision would be necessarily limited; for example, recreational courses to satisfy local demand may have to be charged at the full delivery rate to facilitate funding of priority vocational provision. After discussion of the recruiting variances, which were all positive thus reinforcing the case for additional funding if available, additional information was also needed to allow examination of the NEET situation and possible access to associated ESF. It was agreed to present a comprehensive paper on the associated issues to the next meeting for consideration.

Terry Piggott joined the meeting

- c. Success Rates. Headline improvement ranges for success rates had been robust, enabling sound progress towards reaching the national top decile (within 3 yrs). In particular it was noted that all long courses had made a positive contribution.
- d. Rochdale 16-18 Competition. The competition for 6th Form provision in Rochdale was becoming increasingly focused with anecdotal reports of additional provider interest in participation. The established proposal, involving the local partnership (College, Schools and LEA) had been presented to and supported by the corporation at recent meetings and remained sound and achievable. The proposal, to create a dedicated 6th Form College colocated at the St Mary's Gate campus but governed and managed separately, although with some input from the partnership, was again discussed, reconfirmed as the optimum and agreed as maintaining focus for post 16 education with the college. The Proposal was required at the LLSC by the 8 February 2007 and it would be necessary for the E&F Committee to consider the final version and make recommendations to the Corporation before that date. Accordingly, it was decided that the planned E&F Committee meeting (18 January) would be followed by a special Corporation meeting on 30 January to allow final consideration of the proposal.
- e. SAR. The study group meeting to agree the final version of the annual SAR had been held that afternoon and the final version would now be produced as a

matter of urgency. The report examined and graded, all delivery areas and had been rigorously scrutinised and moderated, it was welcomed as robust and realistic. The content was fully and thoroughly discussed and explanations provided for areas with lower achievements; consequent action plans were received and noted.

- a. **the Information was received;**
- b. **adult provision and associated issues would be considered at the next meeting;**
- c. **the proposal to establish a separately managed and governed 6th Form at the St Mary's Gate campus was agreed;**

15/06 AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT AND MANAGEMENT LETTERS

The Committee Annual Report to the Corporation and the Corporate Governance Statement (recommended AC14/06) to the required format was scrutinised to inform the next item. The Audit Committee recommendations were noted and the reports approved and received. The external auditors' report to the Corporation (Management Letters) (recommended AC15/06), covering AFS and Regularity issues, was then considered. The report was the first in compliance with the International Standards of Auditing, which required closer inspection of systems, controls and fraud issues. There had also a requirement to disclose unadjusted audit areas, there had been none. The Audit Committee had taken great comfort from the positive tone of the letter and the Dir (FP&HR) and staff were commended for their professionalism and this was particularly noted. The recommendation was accepted and the management letters approved and received.

- a. **The Audit Committee Annual Report and the Corporate Governance Statement were received and approved;**
- b. **The Management Letters were received and approved.**

16/06 AFS 2005/06

The exit meeting with the External Auditors had been reassuring with no procedural recommendations and no adjustments to the prepared account numbers. This was the first year requiring full disclosure of pension liability and technical issues surrounding application of FRS 17 had been fully explained and discussed. The accounts were considered in detail, the recommendation of the Audit Committee was accepted and the AFS were approved for signature.

- a. **The Information was received;**
- b. **The AFS 2005/06 were approved for signature.**

17/06 CORPORATION HOUSEKEEPING

- a. Strategic Planning Event. A paper, with availability for suggested dates for the Awayday had been circulated and was collected; the most popular date would be notified asap.
- b. Annual Attendance Report. Consideration of members' attendance was deferred to the next meeting.
- c. Update on Vacancies. Two business and 1 student member vacancies remained; the student vacancy would be run again in the New Year and all were asked to consider any nominations for the business vacancies.
- d. Documentation. Regulatory documentation had been previously considered, the final version was approved; individual bound copies were then distributed.

- a. **The Information was received;**
- b. **Corporation documents were approved and received.**

18/06 URGENT BUSINESS

Pay Award. Analysis of the current budgetary situation had allowed reconsideration of the earlier decisions regarding a staff pay award. As there had not been an E&F Committee meeting to make recommendations the possibilities were detailed for consideration by this meeting. The budgetary position had eased somewhat from the essentially breakeven original plan for 2006/07. Some additional income and reduced levels of expenditure had released funding such that a revised forecast of £206k was now predicted. Accordingly, 4 options had been prepared and were considered; full account was taken of the associated risks (detailed in the paper). Full discussion of the pros and cons of the alternatives were discussed at length and were robustly challenged; influencing factors, such as the loss of valuable staff to local institutions offering higher salaries and the possible effects of recruitment on the income, were considered. It emerged that, on balance, Option 3 was preferred (2% backdated to 1 August) which it was unanimously agreed to implement with immediate effect, it was also agreed to monitor the situation with a view to a possible supplement later in the year.

Option 3 was agreed for immediate implementation.

19/06 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be:

- a. at 1700 on 30 January in Conference Room A in the Henry West Building, Middleton Campus (special meeting);
- b. at 1700 hours on 15 March 2007 in Conference Room A in the Henry West Building, Middleton Campus.