

HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held at the Rookery Hotel on Saturday 17 May 2008 at 1015 hrs.

Present	Sultan Ali	Robert Clegg (Chair)	Derek O'Toole (Principal)
	Linda Feerick	James Gallagher	Paul Harness
	Ann Holt	Alun Morgan	Mohammed Naeem
	Julian Parrett	Terry Piggott	Clint Street
	Clive Reid	Caroline Taylor	
In Attendance	Sarfraz Arfan (AD Corp Svcs (Desig))	Barbara Blake	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)
	Margaret Kingsford (Exec Dir T&L)	David Mayall (Exec Dir FP&HR)	OJ Rahim (Exec Dir Skills (Desig))
	Angela O'Reilly (AD Quality)	Kris Skelton (AD Students)	

The Chairman welcomed Dr OJ Rahim and Sarfraz Arfan, the Executive Director for Skills and Assistant Director for Corporate Services (designate) respectively, to the meeting.

46/07 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.

47/07 CHAIR'S EMERGENCY ACTION

The Chair had taken emergency action to appoint a Discipline Committee (Paul Harness, Alun Morgan and Clive Reid), which had met on 30 April 2008; the action was approved.

The Chair's emergency action was approved.

48/07 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 28 February 2007 were confirmed and signed.

49/07 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES AND NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

- a. There were no matters arising
- b. Two items of urgent business were agreed (Admissions Update and Election of Vice-Chairman).

50/07 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS (Unconfirmed)

- a. Standards Committee (2 April): the minutes were noted.
- b. Audit Committee (30 April 2008);
 - (i) re 26/07. Financial Regulations. The Financial Regulations had been updated to reflect personality and job title changes together with some minor amendments to best practice. The document had been scrutinised by the committee and had been recommended to the Corporation; accordingly, the revised Financial Regulations were approved.

- (ii) re 27/07. Reappointment of Internal Auditors. The committee had recommended the re-appointment of the current internal auditors (PWC) for a further 3 year term commencing 1Aug 2007 at a fee of £430 per diem (for the first year); accordingly the reappointment was approved.
- c. E&F Committee (30 April 2008);
 - (i) re 33/07. Loan Facility. The committee had scrutinised proposals from banks to provide the non-grant element of the accommodation strategy programme (c£10m). After careful consideration they had recommended the Barclays Bank offer; accordingly that offer was accepted.
 - (ii) re 35/07. Tuition fees. The committee had scrutinised and recommended the annual amendment of the tuition fees; accordingly the revised document was approved.
- d. ED Committee (6 May 2008). The minutes were noted.

The following was approved:

- a. The Financial Regulations;**
- b. Reappointment of the internal auditors;**
- c. Appointment of Barclays Bank as the (accommodation strategy) loan provider;**
- d. Tuition Fees.**

51/07 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The AiP for the capital project had now been submitted to the LSC (02.02.08) and was expected to be considered by the Regional Committee on 5 June and recommended to the National Property Committee on the 19 June, together with the Rochdale 6th Form College (RSFC), when approval in principle was expected. The current timeline with key dates was then considered and discussed. It was becoming clear that the timeline for the RSFC was extremely tight if the opening deadline of September 2011 was to be met and some administrative concessions (by the LSC) were likely in an attempt to avoid further delays; it was still hoped to run both projects concurrently and with the same contractor although delays may inhibit that. The College was less vulnerable since there was a 6 month contingency allowance and preparatory work for, such as arrangements for temporary accommodation lease, could be undertaken under conditional arrangements in advance of approval; invitations to tender (ITT) had been issued to the 8 design firms listed in the "Framework Document" a helpful document which could be considered in itself as a critical friend, however "Seven Architects" the existing advisers (To stage C) were not included as an approved firm under the terms of the document and this issue would have to be addressed if valuable experience was not to be lost. Six design agencies had responded to the ITT and selection of the preferred was the crucial decision consequently all would be invited all to make proposals, and after consideration, to invite a maximum of 4 to present to the Estates Development Committee to inform a recommendation to the corporation. Transfer of land, to enable construction of the RSFC, could represent a critical path as the statutory process was necessarily involved and time hungry. A suggested process to minimise these issues and the associated financial risk (if the RSFC progresses excluding HH), had been suggested by Eversheds. Essentially, free transfer of the land would be conditional on AID for HH being granted and payment of consequent capital grant, if this was not forthcoming then RSFC would be obliged to make land value payment; this was considered closely and after full discussion was unanimously agreed. The issue of alternative accommodation was then considered, it had been planned to locate C Block at Mitchell Hey Mill during the construction phase and to accept costs in the region of £5m to facilitate this. However, the site, on more detailed consideration, is less compatible than had originally been assumed and the contingency site at Stake Hill Business Park had emerged as the better option, this view was supported by the LSC and was unanimously agreed. The LSC had indicated that an AiP the Heywood Skills Centre project should be developed under College leadership and involving a wide range of local stakeholders, this was unanimously agreed. The ED (Skills) would shortly be assuming responsibility and to assist in determination of strategy a research project had been initiated, accordingly J2Profit had been commissioned to complete a wide ranging report on the issues.

It was agreed that:

- a. legal advice be accepted regarding the enabling transfer of land to RSFC (accept 1.4.3.);**
- b. AiP be developed for The Heywood Skills Centre.**

The Information was received.

52/07 FINANCE REPORT

The decision taken regarding the loan facility (50/07c (i)) implied full acceptance of the requirement to service the associated repayment schedule and was likely to be a major planning consideration in the future. The Finance Report accurate to 31 March, had been scrutinized in detail by the E&F Committee on 30 April. They had noted that the present forecast position had been distorted by early LSC payments and timing of the staff pay award; the percentage of expenditure on staff costs stood at 70% and it was agreed that the current effort to reduce this should be strenuously maintained and that introduction of the standard contract should remain a priority. To this end negotiation with the unions continued and the E&F Committee would be fully briefed on progress and it was hoped to bring proposals for implementation to the next corporation meeting. It was likely that the budget forecast would be achieved as the profile of LSC payments adjusted as the year progressed and the revised year end position stood at -£288k in line with the first year of the 10 year plan forwarded to the LSC as part of the capital project pack. All variations were noted as fully attributable and were fully analyzed and discussed. The financial effect of the WBL arrangement with TOC continued to adversely affect the position and this area would be a priority for the ED (Skills) early in his assumption of responsibilities. LSC income over the year was based on student numbers and FTE and the current position was scrutinized, the cash value (£16.5m) would be slightly above contact (£16.3m) however the overall and ambitious targets were unlikely to be met, particularly in full level 2 and 3; any clawback would be in 2008/09. Issues relating to the anomalies in accreditation of some courses, and whether they should logically be considered as gaining a qualification, had be considered by the E&F Committee. It appeared in some cases that the LSC criteria actually motivated against student interests. The graphical information was then studied and discussed. Key PIs were then considered and discussed.

53/07 MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS DAY

There were no matters outstanding from the previous day.

54/07 URGENT BUSINESS

- a. An updated admissions report was circulated; this had not been circulated with the papers to allow the most up-to-date position to be considered. It was planned that a weekly report would be compiled to facilitate continuous monitoring of the situation as the data was now much cleaner than formerly and strong reliance could be placed on the information. The current situation was then considered and discussed, compared with the same time last year there were fewer students (-285) and enrolments had been slower. However internal progression had not been included in the figures and these formed a considerable element and the normal late surge in applications would also reinforce the numbers.
 - b. Caroline Taylor proposed and Clint Street seconded Clive Reid as Vice Chairman for the academic year 2007.08, there were no further nominations; carried unanimously
- a. **The Information was received.**
 - b. **Clive Reid was elected as Vice-Chairman for the academic year.**

55/07 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- a. The Chairman thanked all for attending.
- b. The next meeting would be at 1700 hrs on 17 July 2008.