



MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 14th DECEMBER 2010

Date: Tuesday 14th December 2010
Venue: Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 1700hrs - 1910hrs

Present: Mr J Boyle (Chair)
Mr T Bateson
Cl. D Clapham
Mr J Corry
Mr G Curry
Mr S Davies
Ms K Edwards
Mr A Goodinson
Ms F Greeves
Mr R Hutchinson
Dr A Mohan
Ms K Talboys
Ms J Trembles
Mr R Weaver
Mr P Welsh

Together with: Ms K Kirkwood (Deputy Principal)
Mr A Lloyd (Vice Principal Information Systems & Resources) – Agenda item 10
Mrs A Pickup (Director of Finance & Personnel)
Dr J Burgess (Clerk to the Corporation)
Mrs J A Trainor (Assistant to the Clerk to the Corporation)

39.2010 Preliminaries and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and formally introduced Ms Katie Edwards to her first meeting as a Student Governor. Ms Edwards described the visit to Birmingham earlier in the week with senior members of the College to the Ceremony to receive the Beacon College Status. She explained that the College was one of thirteen post-16 organizations, from some 4000 that exist nationally, that have been recognized this year. Governors warmly congratulated the Management Team in securing this coveted designation.

Apologies had been received from Mr M Kimber, Dr D Sanders and Mrs S Walsh.

40.2010 Declaration of Interest

Principal, Deputy Principal and Clerk in item 19.

Action

- 41.2010 Consideration of any items of urgent business.**
It was agreed to consider the validated and agreed Self-Assessment Grades under item 15.
- 42.2010 Appointment of new Governors**
Following the recommendation of the Search Committee (12th October 2010 33.2010 D1), it was proposed that Ms Katie Edwards be elected to the Corporation with immediate effect for a period up to the end of her studies in July 2012.
- 42.2010 D1 Resolved: that Ms Katie Edwards be appointed as a Student Governor until July 2012.**
- 43.2010 Minutes of the last meeting of the Corporation held on the 6th July 2010**
(Paper A)
- 43.2010 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be approved.**
- 44.2010 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 6th July 2010**
All matters had been actioned and the Strategic Review Group had met on two occasions.
- 45.2010 Report on Chair's Action**
None were reported.
- 46.2010 Principal's Report – December 2010**
(Paper B)
- Student Enrolment**
The Principal was pleased to report that the College had met the revised student numbers target. She drew attention to the improved upper sixth cohort and the rise in the lower sixth enrolments, particularly in the context of a declining market.
- In contrast, recruitment to Level 2 courses had declined as local schools increasingly provide BTEC First Qualifications. Governors sought clarification about the increased recruitment from a number of South Fylde schools, and were pleased to learn about the success of the transport arrangements and the launch of the new marketing strategy. The nature of the volatility and competitiveness in the market was explained by the Principal.
- Student Destinations**
Governors studied the three-year trend in Student Destinations and noted an increased number entering HE, (although a lower percentage overall) and increases in the numbers going into employment and apprenticeships. The popularity of UCLAN and Blackpool & The Fylde College indicated the preference for local and vocational programmes.

An investigation was underway to discover the reasons for the downturn in students gaining access to Lancaster University. Concern was voiced about the impact of the proposed increase in student tuition fees. The Principal expressed some concerns about students entering the service industry stating that the imperative was to prioritize careers advice and broaden the scope of support to include employment-based post A level training schemes.

Schools White Paper

This document promised an array of new initiatives from the new coalition government and it was proposed to allow time for detailed discussion at the January 2011 Residential Conference. The closure of the 16-19 funding gap between schools with sixth forms and colleges was welcomed.

Comprehensive Spending Review

The Principal reported on the withdrawal of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) that was currently paid to some 45% of the College's students and its replacement with a very much smaller funding which would be administered by the College. The EMA is used by many students for travel costs, food and attending college programmes. Students have sought the help of local MPs had written letters of protest and signed petitions to the Prime Minister and our MP.

External recognition for good practice – Beacon College Status

The management team were congratulated and thanked for their hard work in securing this remarkable achievement.

46.2010 D1 Resolved: that the Principal's Report be received

47.2010 Key Performance Indicators – December 2010

(Paper C)

Governors scrutinised the 13 key performance indicators and were informed about the increase in the average class size and the reasons for the re-basing of the methodology for calculating success rates.

47.2010 D1 Resolved: that the KPI December 2010 Report be received

48.2010 Accommodation Strategy – Phase 3

The Vice-Principal provided a verbal update on the progress of this phase since the main contractors commenced in July 2010. The problems surrounding the asbestos, the additional surveys, the 3 weeks delay and the disputed charges were outlined. Despite the project's unfortunate start, progress was now promising with the steel framework completed and the floor slabs about to be laid.

The issue regarding replacing street lighting had been resolved with Lancashire County Council, without further costs to the College.

The Director of Finance explained the elements in the Revised Phase 3 Spend Analysis and Forecast Outturn (*Paper E*), which were based upon the latest projections from the College's Quantity Surveyor. The rise in fees and VAT were discussed along with the need to establish an additional realistic contingency to avoid having to repeatedly seek Board approval as unforeseen problems arose. It was considered that an approximate sum of 5% contingency on the original tender price ought to be provided. This necessitated the further approval of £130k to provide a total Project Budget of £5,530k.

It was necessary for the Corporation to approve two detailed resolutions regarding the borrowing facility (*Paper D*). The first allowed the Principal and Director of Finance to make arrangements with the Bank to change the original loan agreement, specifically in respect of pricing of the loan and the covenants. The second resolution allowed the Principal and Director of Finance to agree a bridging facility of £2.5m and the necessary draw down arrangements. The two resolutions were approved.

Governors were disappointed and frustrated to learn of the difficulties being encountered with Blackpool Council in signing the loan agreement for the Phase 3 project. Despite confirmation in the early Autumn that the loan had been approved (and the College signing the agreement in November 2010), the Council had now stated that the loan could not be signed, as necessary Risk Assessments had not been completed. The Principal had made arrangements to meet with officers in January 2011 to discuss these concerns, however, the Chair stated he hoped to discuss the matter with the Council's Chief Executive in the next 24 hours. It was agreed to advise Governors when the loan agreement had been successfully completed.

Principal
To action

The Principal and Vice-Principal provided Governors with an insight into the likely configuration of a potential £8m Phase 4 project, involving the Ribble building and dedicated provision for the Highfurlong Special Needs 16 – 19 students. The aim being to provide all College students with a high quality teaching and learning environment.

48.2010. D1 Resolved: that Revised Phase 3 Spend Analysis and Forecast Outturn be received.

48.2010. D2 Resolved: that a further £130k be approved in respect of contingencies for Phase 3 providing a total budget project cost of £5.530k

48.2010. D3 Resolved: that the two bank loan resolutions, as detailed in Paper D, be approved.

Mr Lloyd left the meeting.

49.2010 Minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 22nd November 2010
(Paper F)

49.2010 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received

- 50.2010 Matters arising from the Minutes of the 22nd November 2010**
Mr Curry, the Chair of the Audit Committee, reported that Mazars, the new Financial Auditors, had attended the meeting.
- He recommended approval of the Report and Financial Statement for the year ending 31st July 2010. (*Paper G.*)
- Governors also reviewed the Management Report from the External Auditors RSM Tenon (*Paper H*)
- The draft Representation Letter (*Paper I*) was reviewed and agreed.
- The Annual Report of the Internal Auditors (*Paper J*) was considered and agreed.
- Mr Curry reviewed the Annual Report of the Audit Committee (*Paper K*) and recommended its approval.
- 50.2010 D1 Resolved: that the Report and Financial Statement for the year ending 31st July 2010 be approved.**
- 50.2010 D2 Resolved: that the Management Report from the External Auditor RSM Tenon be received.**
- 50.2010 D3 Resolved: that the Representation Letter to the External Auditor RSM Tenon be approved.**
- 50.2010 D4 Resolved: that the Internal Audit Annual Report 2009/2010 be approved.**
- 50.2010 D5 Resolved: that the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2009/2010 be approved.**
- 51.2010 Minutes of the Strategic Planning and Standards Committee held on the 28th September 2010**
(*Paper L*)
51.2010. D1 Resolved: to receive the minutes
- 52.2010 Matters arising from the minutes of the 28th September 2010**
The Principal highlighted the dramatic 18% increase in GCSE results (A* - C) at Collegiate High School and congratulated all colleagues involved in an excellent team effort.
- 53.2010 Minutes of the Strategic Planning and Standards Committee held on the 30th November 2010**
(*Paper M*)
53.2010. D1 Resolved: to receive the minutes
- 54.2010 Matters arising from the minutes of the 30th November 2010**
None.
- 55.2010 Minutes of the Search Committee held on 12th October 2010**

(Paper N)

55.2010. D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received.

56.2010 Matters arising from the minutes of the 12th October 2010

In the absence of Mrs Walsh, the Chair briefly reviewed the actions taken. He drew attention to the Attendance Record for 2009 – 2010 (*Paper O*) and considered it to be an improvement in comparison to the attendance record of previous years. However, he emphasized the importance of regular attendance. Governors reviewed and noted the revised Code of Conduct 2010 – 2012, which had been updated in conjunction with the solicitors Eversheds. It was anticipated that further work on the Code might feature in the forthcoming 2011 Residential.

56.2010. D1 Resolved: that the Attendance Record for 2009 / 10 be received.

56.2010. D2 Resolved: that the Code of Conduct 2010 – 2012 be approved.

57.2010 Minutes of the Search Committee held on 29th November 2010

(Paper Q)

57.2010. D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received.

58.2010 Matters arising from the minutes of the 29th November 2010

The draft programme for the 2011 Residential Conference (*Paper R*) was discussed and the change of facility noted. Governors were urged to ensure that they could attend this important and very beneficial annual training and development event.

58.2010. D1 Resolved: that the draft programme for the Residential Conference be approved.

59.2010 Minutes of the Administration and Finance Committee held on 13th October 2010.

(Paper S)

59. 2010. D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received.

60.2010 Matters arising from the minutes of the 13th October 2010

Mr Welsh, Chair of the Committee, drew attention to the close monitoring of the progress on Phase 3 Accommodation Strategy.

61.2010 Minutes of the Administration and Finance Committee held on the 24th November 2010

(Paper T)

61.2010. D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received

62.2010 Matters arising from the Minutes of the 24th November 2010

Mr Welsh stated that the Annual Financial Report for the year ending 31st July 2010 had been scrutinized. He noted that the recommended actions in respect of Phase 3 had been approved earlier in the meeting.

Govs
To note

Action

Additional copies of the Disaster Management Plan 2010 were distributed to Governors.

63.2010 Minutes of the Self-Assessment Committee held on 23rd November 2010

(Paper U)

Mr Weaver, Chair of the Committee, described the function of the Committee in reviewing the processes and work of the Governors and preparing a quality improvement plan to enhance the governance process. The Governors reviewed the minutes, the Strengths and Areas for Development and agreed the proposed action plan. The Deputy Principal was thanked for her support on this process.

The basis of the recently circulated electronic questionnaire on Governance was explained, and all Governors were urged to complete the survey on-line as soon as possible. The outcomes would be discussed at the Residential Conference.

Govs
To complete

Mr Weaver reviewed the two-day Self-Assessment validation process held the previous week, and commended the rigour and challenge of the Panel.

The Principal tabled a Summary of the Self-Assessment Grades awarded and re-assured Governors that no area of the College was judged to be less than satisfactory. Apart from two satisfactory areas, the College was rated either Good or Outstanding. Governors congratulated all concerned on an excellent result.

63.2010. D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received.

63.2010. D2 Resolved: that the Governance Self Assessment and proposed Action Plan are approved.

63.2010.D3 Resolved: that the College Self-Assessment Grades are received.

64.2010 Equality and Diversity Self Assessment Report 2010

(Paper V)

The Principal explained that the draft Equality and Diversity Report was not ready to be reviewed at the last Strategic Planning and Standards Committee meeting and given its importance, she would like to highlight some of the developments and achievements. Governors were impressed by the level of detail provided and were assured that the College had taken significant steps to meet the requirements of the Single Equality Act. Questions from Governors prompted discussions relating to anti-bullying, LGBT issues and the role of Torch Bearers. Ms Talboys offered her assistance in relation to training and related professional development issues in equality and diversity.

Principal
To take
forward

64.2010. D1 Resolved: that the Equality and Diversity Self Assessment Report 2010 be received.

65.2010 Estimation of Risk
The meeting reflected on the items discussed and noted that now the Loan agreement with Blackpool Council should be recognised as a significant new risk area.

66.2010 Any other business
The Chair reminded Governors about the Festival of Lessons & Carols being held at St Chad's Church on Thursday 16th December 2010 at 1930hrs.

The Clerk, senior management, staff and students left the meeting.

67.2010. Confidential item
The meeting considered and approved the recommendations detailed in the minutes of the Remuneration Committee held on 13th December 2010. Members asked the Remuneration Committee to review its mechanism of conducting the Performance Review and Salary Determination of the senior post holders and Clerk to ensure best practice and that the Corporation could approve the terms before they were finally agreed with staff.

Clerk
To take forward

67.2010. D1 Resolved: that the Minutes and recommendations of the Remuneration Committee 13th December 2010 be approved.

67.2010. D2 Resolved: that a revised process for the Performance Review of senior post holders and the Clerk be established for 2011.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Corporation is **Tuesday 5th April 2011 at 1700hrs.**

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and contributions.

Signed: _____

Chair: _____

Date: _____