

SOUTH CHESHIRE COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON THURSDAY 29 MARCH 2007 COMMENCING AT 2.05 PM

Present:

K Lea (Chair of the Corporation)
V Harris (Vice-Chair of the Corporation)
D J Collins (Principal and Chief Executive)
B Dean
J Dowell
J Dwyer
D Felton
S Field (from the point as shown)
G Fyffe
S Utting
T Wheeler
S Yates

In attendance:

S Cowell (Managing Director, South Cheshire Enterprises Limited)
P Swift (Deputy Principal and Director of Studies)
G Bebbington (Director of Finance and Administration)
D Harwood (Director of Quality)
E Davies-Jones (Clerk to the Corporation)

Item

11/07 FORMAL MATTERS

11/01/07 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Pat Birchall, Ian Carruthers and Abdi Yusuf.

11/02/07 Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting the Chair asked the members attending this meeting to declare any personal or prejudicial interests and the nature of that interest, in any item of business on the agenda and, if necessary, to leave the meeting prior to discussion of that item. No declarations of interest were made.

11/03/07 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting (Part A) held on 19 January 2007

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of Part A of the meeting held on 19 January 2007 be approved as a true and accurate records of those meetings and that the Chair sign them accordingly.

11/04/07 Appointment of Student Governor

Members were informed that following the resignation of Joshua Hewitt, the student governor who had been appointed as a member of the Corporation on 30 November 2006 nominations for a new student governor had been obtained and an election had been held. Members were informed that Simon Field was the student receiving the highest number of votes in the election. Members considered the nomination of Simon Field for the position of student governor.

IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Simon Field as a student member for a term of office ending 31 July 2007.

Simon Field joined the meeting at this point

11/05/07 Matter Arising from the Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 30/11/06 : Minute No: 59/06: Final Report on Mock Inspection

The Director of Quality presented the paper providing members with a final report on the outcome of the “internal” inspection of the college which had been undertaken in March 2006. He informed members that the report from the mock inspection was very positive and he drew members’ attention to the key strengths of the college which had been highlighted in the report. He informed members that inspection had been undertaken as a development exercise to inform realistic self-assessment under the format of the Common Inspection Framework and highlight areas for improvement. He provided members with a detailed summary focusing on the areas for improvement which has been identified and the progress which has been made since the mock inspection and the further actions for improvement which are included as key elements within the Quality Improvement Plan and will continue to be monitored throughout the academic year through the Quality Improvement Review process.

Members noted the value which had been gained from the mock inspection and made a recommendation that the exercise should be repeated in the not too distant future.

IT WAS RESOLVED to:

- ***receive the report and welcome the feedback; and***
- ***to require that a further dedicated internal mock inspection with outside representation is undertaken within 2 years in the event that an official inspection is not undertaken in that period.***

**12/07 LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL CONSULTATION DOCUMENT:
“Delivering World-Class Skills in a Demand-led System”**

The Deputy Principal presented the paper providing members with a summary of the key proposals contained in the Learning and Skills consultation document ‘*Delivering World-class Skills in a Demand-led System*’. He gave a presentation informing of the proposed reforms detailed in the document which are responding to the recommendations contained in the Leitch Review of Skills (*Prosperity for all in the global economy – world-class skills; December 2006*). He went on to inform members of three themes of the consultation, namely: a FE system fit for the future; key aspects of new funding models; and cross-cutting issues such as the provision for special educational needs, learning difficulties, disabilities and additional learning support needs. The Chair asked members to consider the report in preparation for further discussions, focusing on the issues which the document raises, at the next Corporation meeting.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to receive a further update on the progress of the proposals at the next Corporation meeting.

13/07 OPERATIONAL PLAN 2006/7

The Principal presented the paper providing members with an update on the progress of the operational plan covering the progress to date against the 60 identified operational objectives from within the college's strategic plan.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and note the progress towards implementation of the operational plan for 2006/07.

14/07 COLLEGE PROGRAMME 2007/8

The Deputy Principal gave members a verbal update informing them that no allocation has been set by the Learning and Skills Council and therefore the College Programme would not be determined until those details were available. He informed members that details of the indicative allocation were expected to be received by the College in the near future. He went on to table a paper providing members with details of the number allocations which the College has proposed to the Learning and Skills Council for funding in 2007/08.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the verbal report and agree to receive the details of the College Programme for 2007/08 at the next meeting of the Corporation.

15/07 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2006/7 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2007

The Director of Finance and Administration presented the financial statements to 28 February 2007 which showed –

- closing bank balance £2,151,000 (original forecast £1,634,000);
- projected operating surplus of £387,000 and historical cost surplus of £489,000 against original forecasts of £311,000 operating surplus and £413,000 historical cost surplus;
- projected bank balance as at the year end is £1,643,00 (original forecast £1,545,000);
- Current ratio of 1.75:1 maintaining Grade A Financial Status;
- Closing bank balance is forecast to be £1,643,000 compared to an original forecast of £1,545,000;

In answer to questions the Director of Finance and Administration informed members that the accounts for South Cheshire Enterprises Limited were presented as a simple summary and that he was seeking the advice of the College's Internal Auditors with regard to the level of detail and the appropriate method for way in which the subsidiary company should report the accounts of the company to the Corporation as sole shareholder.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and approve the financial statements to 28 February 2007.

16/07 RISK MANAGEMENT 2006/07 UPDATE

Members reviewed the updated risk register noting that each of the Corporation committee has continued to monitor the risks relevant to the committee's terms of reference at their meetings to date in 2006/07. Members were informed that two members of the Campus Development Committee, the Principal and John Dwyer, together with the new student governor, attended a risk management workshop with the

new build design team on Monday 26 March and that following on from that meeting a the risk register for the new build programme is being reviewed by the Project Manager with updates on that separate risk register to be included in the Project Manager's regular monthly report to the Campus Development Committee.

IT WAS RESOLVED to note the current position in respect of the management of the risks identified in the risk register.

17/07 GOVERNOR/CURRICULUM LINKS PROGRAMME UPDATE

Members received a report on the progress of the programme of curriculum link visits arranged and undertaken to date. The Director of Quality informed members that the feedback received from the visits would be used to inform the Quality Improvement Review process and form part of the College's Self Assessment Report

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

18/07 REPORTS OF THE CHAIR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES

18/01/07 Report of the Chair

The Chair informed members that in the period following the last Corporation meeting he had been heavily involved in the Campus Re-development Programme and also in reviewing the interaction between the College and its subsidiary company.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

18/02/07 Report of the Chief Executive

The Principal presented the paper informing members of discussions held with the LSC with regard to next year's programme and allocations. He informed members that the growth projected in the North West cannot be funded within the present LSC budget and hence low priority adult provision is unlikely to be fully supported. Student number projections for next year have been resubmitted, with a proportionately greater increase in 16-19 year old provision proposed including additional work for the NEET group (not engaged in education or training) and that when final agreement with the LSC is reached it may be necessary for the college to undertake some unfunded adult provision to preserve this aspect of its work in readiness for a future change of government policy. The paper informed members that with regard to curriculum development the present programme is being re-examined by the Deputy Principal to align it more fully with government priorities and that the college has also taken a lead on the 14-16 Diploma preparatory work for Information Technology, contributing to a range of 14-16 initiatives in the area, building on this year's successful work with Shavington school and Ruskin school.

He informed members that the first full review of the college's staffing requirements in over 5 years is currently being undertaken. This review is being undertaken in response to the perceived changes in national policy and funding. Proposals for change (short-term or long term) will be considered in the summer term with particular attention is being paid to support functions and the changes in the college's requirements as systems develop and are better integrated. He went on to inform members that with regard to concerns surrounding the

effectiveness of the Group tutorial system, staff are actively looking at ways in which the delivery of the mandatory requirements can be improved.

He went on to inform members that the College has successfully re-assessed for its Matrix award, which is given for the quality of its advice and guidance and was included in the Sunday Times "List of the 100 Best companies to Work For" for the second year running, rising in the league table from 61st to 58th. The college is also accredited by the same organisation as "two star – outstanding"

In addition he informed members that the local office of the Learning and Skills Council had considered the Application in Principle (AiP) for the new campus development project at its meeting held on the evening of 28 March and that unanimous approval for the AiP had been given with very encouraging indications as to its future progress.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

18/03/07 Campus Development Committee Report

The Chair presented the report informing members of the decisions which had been taken by the Committee at its meetings held on 9 February and 9 March 2007 in accordance with the terms of reference which had been approved by the Corporation on 19 January 2007.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to note that the Campus Development Committee, acting with the authority and on behalf of the Corporation, has:

- ***approved the content of the Application in Principle and the submission of that document to the Learning and Skills Council.***
- ***approved the appointment of Barclays Bank plc to provide the necessary short term and long term financing of the new build project***

18/04/07 Quality and Standards Committee Report

Members considered the report of the Quality and Standards Committee concerning those matters which the Committee had considered at its meeting held on 8 February 2007. Members considered the recommendation of the Committee concerning the updated Academic Appeals Policy.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to approve and adopt the Academic Appeals Policy SCCPOL 01.

18/05/07 Audit Committee Report

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the report informing members of the matters which had been considered by the Committee at its meeting held on 8 March 2007 and in particular the reports which had been presented to the Committee by the Internal Auditors concerning the Corporate Governance and Risk Management aspects of the Campus Development Programme. He drew members attention to the issue of the monitoring of the detailed risk register for the subsidiary company which will be a matter for the Board of Directors of South Cheshire Enterprises Ltd rather than the Audit Committee.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

18/06/07

Organisational Development Committee Report

The Chair of the Organisational Development Committee presented the report to members informing members of the specific recommendations made by the Committee to be considered for approval by the Corporation including those policies and procedures which had been considered and were now being recommended to the Corporation for approval.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to:

- ***approve and adopt the Health and Safety Policy SCCPOL 11***
- ***approve and adopt the Quality Policy SCCPOL 00***
- ***approve and adopt the Data Protection Policy SCCPOL 06***
- ***note that the Disciplinary Procedures – Staff SCCPOL 27 has been reviewed and that no changes to that policy are proposed at this time.***
- ***approve and adopt the Maternity Leave and Flexible Working Policies which have both been amended in line with the new statutory provisions***

18/07/07

Search Committee Report

The Chair presented the report informing members of the matters which had been considered by Committee members at the meeting held on 15 March 2007 and in particular the recommendations put forward by the Committee to the Corporation for its approval concerning the appointment of the external co-opted committee members as new business governors at the end of the current academic year and the requirement to undertake Criminal Records Bureau checks for those governors who are re-appointed, re-elected and newly appointed.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and approve that:

- ***the co-opted committee members, Mrs Claire Blanchard and Miss Liz Hall should be appointed as a business governors as from 1 August 2007;***
- ***Simon Field be appointed as a member of the Quality and Standards Committee;***
- ***a programme should be commenced to identify and recruit potential new governors;***
- ***re-appointed or re-elected governors and new members of the Corporation who are aged over 18, shall be required to undertake an enhanced CRB check; and***
- ***that Tim Wheeler be requested to review and report back to the Corporation as to whether the University of Chester could act as the third party in undertaking such CRB checks, with the results of the checks then being disclosed to the Clerk and in the event of a relevant disclosure, the Clerk discussing the disclosure with the individual governor and if necessary referring the matter for a final decision to the Principal / Chair as officers of the Corporation.***

18/08/07

Finance Committee Report

The Vice-Chair, as Chair of the Finance Committee presented the report informing members of the matters which had been considered by Committee members at the meeting held on 15 March 2007 and in particular the recommendation put forward by the Committee to the Corporation concerning the approval of the Tuition Fee Policy for 2007/08.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and:

- **approve the Tuition Fee Policy; and**
- **as shareholder, receive the report of the Finance Committee on the performance of South Cheshire Enterprises Limited noting that the direction and management of the business of the company is under the control of the Board of Directors of that company.**

18/09/07 Clerk's Report

Members considered the report on the attendance of members at Corporation and committee meeting in the year to date.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and note the overall attendance of members at Corporation and committee meetings in the year to date.

19/07 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19/01/07 South Cheshire Enterprises Ltd

The Managing Director fo South Cheshire Enterprises Ltd informed members that a specific point has arisen in connection with the pre-qualification questions which are required to be answered when bidding for international training contracts. He requested the Corporation to consider approval being given by the Corporation for South Cheshire Enterprises Limited to act as the College's agent as and when necessary in bidding for international training contracts.

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve that South Cheshire Enterprises Limited be appointed to act as the College's agent as and when necessary in bidding for international training contracts.

19/02/07 Change of Signatory to College Bank Accounts

Julia Dowell, as Deputy Director of Finance, informed members of the proposal that Peter Swift, as Deputy Principal, should replace Stan Cowell, the former Deputy Principal as a signatory on the College's Bank accounts and that the Bank Mandate be changed accordingly.

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve that Peter Swift replace Stan Cowell as a signatory to the College's bank accounts and that the Bank Mandate be changed accordingly.

20/07 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

IT WAS RESOLVED to change the date of the next Corporation meeting from Thursday 24th May 2007 to Tuesday 22 May 2007 commencing at 2pm.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded after Part B business at 4.20 p.m.

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(Chair)

Production: 30 March 2007
Chair's approval: 16 April 2007
Corporation approval: 22 May 2007