

SOUTH CHESHIRE COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION/SMT PERFORMANCE RETREAT HELD AT CRANAGE HALL ON FRIDAY 7 DECEMBER 2007 AT 9.00 AM

PART A MINUTES

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	(from the point shown)
D Felton	
S Field	
G Fyffe	(from the point shown)
L Hall	
S Utting	
T Wheeler	(from and until the points as shown)
S Yates	

In attendance:

P Swift	(Deputy Principal and Director of Studies)
S Cowell	(Managing Director, South Cheshire Enterprises Limited)
G Bebbington	(Director of Finance and Administration)
K Gee	(Director of Marketing, Operations and Commercial Activities)
D Harwood	(Director of Quality)
N Peet	(Director of Curriculum Support)
S Salter	(Director of Organisational Development)
E Davies-Jones	(Clerk to the Corporation)

Item

56/07 FORMAL MATTERS

56/1/07 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from John Dwyer, Claire Blanchard, Margaret Simon and Abdi Yusuf.

56/2/07 Declarations of Interest

The Chair enquired whether any of the members attending this meeting considered that they held any personal interest in the items as listed on the agenda to be considered at this meeting. No declarations of interest were made.

57/07 SESSION 1 – STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND CURRICULUM AREA SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORTS 2006/07

Tim Wheeler and Gordon Fyffe joined the meeting at this point

57/1/07 The College as a Whole: Student Achievements and Standards

The Principal presented a report summarising student performance in 2006/07 and which included charts of student success, retention and achievement rates showing performance over a three year period from 2004/. He drew members' attention to the following specific points:

- overall success rate for long programmes for 16-18 and for 19+ has improved from 74% in 2005/06 to 78% in 2006/07 with both age groups above national rates for the last three years;

- a significant reduction in adult student numbers from 6,352 in 2005/06 to 2,554 in 2006/07, as a consequence of the reduction in the funding provided by the Learning and Skills Council for adult provision. This significant change in the mix of provision impacting on the overall short course success rates but, on a like for like comparison, the College can be seen to have maintained its success rate for short courses;
- Overall A-level pass rate was 99.8% and the AS level pass rate was 91% in 2006/07; A2 pass rate being 7% above the national benchmark and AS pass rate being 11% above the national benchmark;
- The introduction of the on-line student tracker is providing tighter checks on attendance levels and it is anticipated that this will have a further positive effect on success rates;
- The Learning and Skills Council gave approval for the new build at the "Application in Principle" stage;
- The College achieved a position for a second year running in the list of the Sunday Times List of 100 Best Companies to work for, 58th place in the list, being an improvement on the previous year;
- The senior management team had been strengthened with the appointment of the Deputy Principal and the Director of Quality during the course of the year.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and note the performance of the student body in 2006/07

57/2/07 Curriculum Area Self Assessment Reports

Members went on to receive and consider the content and grading of self-assessment reports for 2006/07 for each curriculum area. The self assessment reports covered the assessed grading, scope of provision, summaries of student numbers and staff numbers, teaching and learning grades, retention achievement and success rates, review of improvements made over the previous year. The reports included a review on how "Every Child Matters" has been incorporated into the curriculum area during the year 2006/07 and the quality improvement plan covering the planned actions for improvements to be undertaken in the year 2007/08. The reports were presented by the linked governor and senior management team member linked to the specific curriculum the area. The verbal reports included feedback from the governor's curriculum link visits undertaken during the year namely the staff focus groups, student focus groups and the final meeting with the Head of Faculty, Quality Manager and the Curriculum Area Head at which the self assessment report for the area had been considered.

Notes of key points considered are contained in Appendix 1.

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the curriculum area self assessment reports subject to amendment as discussed.

Tim Wheeler left the meeting following the presentation of the curriculum area self assessment report on Hairdressing and Beauty.

57/3/07 Destination Analysis

The Director of Marketing and Operations presented the following summary of destinations of full-time students at the end of 2006/07:

Student Destinations	2004-05		2005-06	%	2006-07	%
University-HE	428	16.4	431	17.0	538	20.08
Employment/Apprenticeship/Uniformed Services	389	14.9	353	14.0	404	15.1
Gap Year	13	0.5	17	0.7	44	1.7
Unemployed-Seeking Employment	230	8.8	149	5.8	235	8.8
SCC Progressed to Yr 2 course-continuing with a course	1515	57.8	1521	60.0	1400	52.1
Another College	27	1.0	25	1.0	34	1.3
Moved -Returned Home	15	0.5	17	0.7	24	0.9
Unknown	5	0.1	20	0.8	4	0.1
Totals	2622	100.0	2533	100.0	2683	100.0

She informed members that separate reports of the analysed data are given to schools to inform them of the progress of their former pupils.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and note the destinations of students in 2006/07.

57/4/07 Governor/Curriculum Links for 2008

The proposed governor links for the 2007/08 programme, commencing in Spring 2008, was considered.

IT WAS RESOLVED that members should notify the Clerk to the Corporation of their preferred option(s) by end December 2007 so that the Chair could consider and confirm the governor/curriculum area links programme in January 2008.

Lunch was taken at this point.

Julia Dowell joined the meeting at this point.

58/07 SESSION 2: FUNCTIONAL AREA SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORTS 2006/07

Functional Area Self Assessment Reports

Each SMT member presented the draft self-assessment report for their functional area for the year. SMT members and governors focused discussion particularly on areas for development.

Notes of salient points considered are contained in Appendix 3.

IT WAS RESOLVED to :

- ***receive the functional area self assessment reports;***
- ***to approve the draft self assessment report for 2006/07;***

The meeting was adjourned at 2.45pm and reconvened at 3.20pm

59/07 SESSION 3: Audit Committee Reports and Approval of Audited Accounts 2006/07

59/1/07 Audit Committee Annual Report

Members considered the Audit Committee's annual report to the Corporation, the internal auditors' annual report for 2006/07 and the financial statements auditors' management letter for 2006/07, which the Corporation is required to consider before approving the annual report and accounts.

The internal auditors had indicated in their annual report that they were satisfied that sufficient internal audit work had been undertaken to allow them to draw a reasonable conclusion as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's risk management, control and governance processes. In their opinion, for the 12 months ended 31 July 2007, the College had adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage the achievement of the College's objectives.

The financial statements auditors' report had been considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2007 with representatives of the auditors. The audit had been completed. KPMG would be signing an unqualified audit report and were on schedule to sign off the financial statements by 31 December 2007. There were no specific matters raised in the management letter, which were material to the accounts and affected the audit opinion.

Members considered the financial statements auditors' statement that based on their review of the corporate governance and risk management arrangements at the College they were satisfied that the College is able to make a full compliance statement with regard to compliance with the provisions of the "Combined Code on Corporate Governance" throughout the year ended 31 July 2007.

Members were informed that the Audit Committee's discussions with internal and financial statements auditors had satisfied members that the Committee's advice was appropriate and soundly based. The Audit Committee's advice accordingly was that the College's risk management, control and governance processes are adequate and effective and may be relied upon by the governing body, subject to and in reliance upon the matters and opinions set out in the document, and the evidence upon which that opinion was based. The Audit Committee's report also set out details of the extent to which the committee's terms of reference had been covered during the year.

The Audit Committee's annual report provided members with the results of the governance self assessment for the year ending 31 July 2007, incorporating the following –

- Members' responses to self-assessment questionnaire
- Audit Committee's advice on governance processes
- Completed performance statements and indicators for governance

IT WAS RESOLVED:

- *to receive the report;*
- *approve the Audit Committee's annual report for 2006/07;*
- *receive the internal audit annual report;*
- *receive the financial statements auditors' management letter for the year ended 31 July 2007.*

59/2/07 Approval of Audited Accounts for South Cheshire College consolidated accounts

The Director of Finance and Administration presented the annual report and accounts for South Cheshire College and South Cheshire Enterprises Limited for the year ended 31 July 2007. He informed members that the accounts were considered by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 22 November and were recommended by that committee for approval by the Corporation. He went on to inform members that:

- the profit and loss account shows a surplus for the year of £53,000 pre FRS 17 and a deficit of £44,000 post FRS 17, that the general reserves pre FRS 17 are £ 4,298,000 and post FRS 17 £ 2,159,000 and that the accounts must be submitted to the LSC by no later than 31 December 2007;
- the audited directors' report and accounts for South Cheshire Enterprises Limited, were considered by the board of directors of the Company at the Board meeting held on 12 November 2007 and had been approved at the company's annual general meeting held earlier this afternoon;

IT WAS RESOLVED –

- *to note the contents of the letter of representation submitted with the report and to authorise the Chair to sign and deliver it to the financial statements auditors on behalf of the Corporation;*
- *to approve the annual report and accounts (including the consolidated accounts) of the Corporation for the year ended 31 July 2007;*
- *to note the date of presentation of the annual report to stakeholders at the College's annual meeting on 6 March 2008 from 8.00 am.*

60/07 SESSION 4: THEMES FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT ON 25 JANUARY 2008

Members considered the topics for consideration at the strategic planning retreat on 25 January 2008 including the changing world in which the Further Education now operates and the direction of future provision.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the meeting should receive and consider:

- ***a comprehensive report and discussion to be lead by the Deputy Principal, covering the future of the College from an outward looking perspective with recommendations to include: how the provision of educational services should be changed, what should be offered and what type of organisational structure should be adopted to deliver the new requirements;***

There being no further business, the meeting concluded after Part B business at 4.15p.m.

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(Chair)

Production: 13 December 2007

Chair's approval: 15 December 2007

Corporation approval: 25 January 2008

APPENDIX 1 – NOTES ON CURRICULUM AREA SELF ASSESSMENT REPORTS

(Ref: Minute No: 57/2/07):

Actions and improvements addressing issues raised in the previous year's Self assessment report:

Science and Mathematics Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improvements in retention achievement and success rates across the provision, identification of facilities required & to be provided within the new build, improvement in the consistency of MAP testing, enhancement of enrichment activities and vocational assignment work provision.

Construction Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improvements in success rates, refurbishment of the construction base room, introduction of on-site testing for the CITB Health and Safety qualification, redesigning of the tutorial system allowing greater flexibility, continued improvements focusing on delivery of active and flexible learning, increased focus on the quality of feedback given to learners, the integration of enrichment into the curriculum area enabling a more relevant and personalised approach to provision to be achieved

Engineering Technology and Manufacturing Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improvements in success rates, improvements in the tutorial system and in the delivery of active and flexible learning with new assessment materials utilised and improved feedback to learners, introduction of on-site testing for the CITB Health and Safety qualification.

Business Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improvements in success, achievement and retention rates across the provision, review of the standard of teaching accommodation, identification of appropriate IT and testing use as teaching tools, further development of work experience and the enrichment programme.

Education and Training Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improvements in achievement and success rates across the provision, mentors have been appointed in most curriculum areas, team membership and leadership has been re-organised to improve communication and better monitoring of student progress, advanced practitioner has been used to enhance knowledge and sharing of good practice.

Information and Communications Technology Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improved results on ECDL courses, introduction and use of specialist software, new BTEC First Diploma in IT has been successfully implemented and completed with 100% achievement rate and 81% success rate, IT provision in the community has been maintained, majority of vocational students undertook a period of work experience, new on-line grade recording system has been introduced, CISCO equipment purchased for student use as from September 2007.

Catering and Hospitality Actions and improvements over the past year have included: development of licensed trade courses, increased student involvement in demonstrations and competitions, development of links with local restaurants and hotels

Sport and Recreation Actions and improvements over the past year have included: a coaching award is offered, retention rate has been improved on the first diploma in sport course; sport development and fitness course has been action planned to improve retention, employability skills work is used to complement the 2nd year sports course and help in readiness for future employment..

Travel and Tourism Actions and improvements over the past year have included: success rates on most courses have improved, retention rates on First Diploma and BTEC National Diploma Year 1 courses have improved, variety of day and residential visits are used to enhance the learning experience, development of courses to meet the demands of a changing industry..

Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improved retention on the BTEC National Diploma in Beauty Therapy, achievement on NVQ2 Beauty Therapy and NVQ2 Hairdressing has improved, new computers and projectors are being utilised, the faculty super tutor provides increased tutorial support for student

Health, Public Services and Care Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improved retention and achievement across the provision introduction of more practical activities within teaching sessions to enhance the learning experience, inclusion of Every Child Matters within schemes of work.

Visual Arts and Media & Performing Arts Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improved success rates across the provision, development of the curriculum to meet current and future needs e.g. replacement of the National Diploma in Design by the National Diploma in Graphics and Design, enhanced interviews for all students who wish to progress internally which has resulted in improved retention, improvements to enable students to access physical resources.

History, Philosophy and Theology & Social Sciences Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improvements in success rates across the provision, development of introduction of Philosophy at A2, increased level of ICT provision, use of staff development activities to disseminate good practice, investigation to develop external links with related departments in local schools and university departments.

Languages, Literature and Culture Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improved success rates across the provision, residential trips to Berlin and Southern Spain for students studying modern languages, subscriptions to Podcasts allowing daily news broadcasts and “coffee break” Spanish lessons readily available through the Language Lab.

Foundation Programmes, Actions and improvements over the past year have included: improved success rates across the provision, opening of a Language School for ESOL provision, use of the Log Cabin which has provided an enhanced or more realistic learning environment for students

APPENDIX 2 – NOTES ON FUNCTIONAL AREA SELF ASSESSMENT REPORTS
(Ref: Minute No: 58/07):

Leadership and Management New appointments at Deputy Principal and Director of Quality level are in place. The campus new build programme has progressed with Application in Principle approval having been granted by the Learning and Skills Council and the Application in Detail having been submitted to the LSC in December 2007. The College has been recognised for the second year running as being in the Sunday Times list of "100 best companies to work for".

Governance Staff focus group and student focus group meetings were held as part of the governors' curriculum link programme and the curriculum link visits by governors are to be further developed.

College Programmes and Quality On line Student Tracker system has been introduced to monitor and provide feedback on student performance and attendance. The Young Apprenticeship in Science has progressed into its second year and A Young Apprenticeship in Sport Science has been introduced. The model continues to be used as a blueprint for the college's 14-16 curriculum developments. The College continues to develop the target setting approach, with all full-time and substantial part-time students having clear, well understood targets and performance against these targets is monitored throughout with an appropriate action planning review process. The College has continued to develop excellent partnerships with local schools, colleges, higher education institutions and private providers to support curriculum development and delivery.

Curriculum Support An enhanced system of identification and support for talented students in the College with a College system enables gifted and talented students to apply for financial assistance to enable them to attend courses, coaching or events to develop their talent or skill. Identification of provision relevant for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has been enhanced through the provision of an updated screening assessment process which is available electronically.

Marketing, Operations and Commercial Activities Employer Engagement continues to be developed and a customer relationship management system has been introduced. Liaison with schools across South Cheshire through curriculum links with local schools and the involvement of the schools liaison team. The campus development project has progressed, consultation has taken place with the local community and a green travel plan is being developed.

Organisational Development/Health and Safety Emphasis has been placed on the promotion of Every Child Matters with learners being well guided and supported by the Student Advice team. There has been a continued programme of health and safety training for staff. A cross-college role has been introduced to ensure compliance with the Equality and Diversity agenda. There is continued commitment to a programme of continuing professional development enabling staff to update their skills. Thirteen middle managers successfully completed the Aspiring Leaders Programme. The Starting Point Nursery was inspected by Ofsted in July 2007 with quality and standards of care and nursery education being judged as sound.

Finance and Administration Improvements to the system of fixed asset tracking continue to be made. A Procurement Manager has been appointed with an on-line ordering system being introduced. The financial transactions resulting from the expansion in the activities of the College's subsidiary company have been successfully incorporated and managed within the department.