

SOUTH CHESHIRE COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL CORPORATION/SMT RETREAT HELD AT CRANAGE HALL HOLMES CHAPEL ON FRIDAY 25 JANUARY 2008 COMMENCING AT 9.00 AM

Present:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| K Lea | (Chair of the Corporation) |
| V Harris | (Vice-Chair of the Corporation) |
| D J Collins | (Principal and Chief Executive) |
| C Blanchard | |
| B Dean | |
| J Dowell | (from the point shown) |
| J Dwyer | |
| D Felton | |
| S Field | (until the point shown) |
| G Fyffe | |
| L Hall | |
| M Simon | (until the point shown) |
| S Utting | |

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) |
| K Gee | (Director of Marketing and Operations) |
| N Peet | (Director of Curriculum Support) |
| S Salter | (Director of Organisational Development) |
| E Davies-Jones | (Clerk to the Corporation) |

The Chair welcomed members of the Corporation and SMT to the meeting and outlined the objectives of the meeting namely to provide an opportunity for members of the governing body and SMT to discuss important issues relating to the College's strategy, educational character, mission and performance in the forthcoming year and beyond.

PART A

Item

01/08 FORMAL MATTERS

01/01/08 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Wheeler and Simon Yates.

01/02/08 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.

01/03/08 Resignation of Co-opted Governor

Members were informed that due to the pressure of his other commitments, Abdi Yusuf had resigned from his position as a member of the Corporation by giving written notice to the Clerk to the Corporation.

IT WAS RESOLVED to note the resignation and to thank Abdi Yusuf for his valuable contribution as a member of the Corporation.

Julia Dowell joined the meeting at this point.

01/04/08 Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 30 November 2007 & the Minutes of the Meeting (Part A) held on 7 December 2007

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2007 and the minutes of Part A of the meeting held on 7 December 2007 be approved as a true and accurate records of those meetings and that the Chair sign them accordingly.

Matters Arising:

Minute No: 55/07 Non-Trading (Dormant) Subsidiary Companies

Members were informed that the resignation of John Howard as the sole director of The Cheshire Management Company Limited required the Corporation as shareholder to appoint a director of the company.

IT WAS RESOLVED by the Corporation, acting in its capacity as the shareholder of The Cheshire Management Centre Limited, to appoint Graham Bebbington as the sole director of that company.

Minute No: 57/4/07 Governor/Curriculum Links for 2008

Members considered the proposed list of governor- curriculum links for the 2007/08 programme.

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the programme of links as presented.

Minute No 49/03/07 Appointment of new member of the Corporation

Members considered the vacancy arising as a result of the resignation of Abdi Yusuf and the recommendation of the Search Committee received at the Corporation meeting held on 30 November concerning the appointment of Ronald Jones.

IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Ronald Jones as a member of the Corporation in accordance with Clause 2(1)(a) of the Instrument of Government.; the appointment being for an initial period of one year in accordance with the Corporation's Standing Orders.

01/05/08 Introduction of the new Instrument and Articles of Government and Amendments to the Corporation's Standing Orders

Members considered the paper setting out the details of changes effected by the introduction of the new Instrument and Articles of Government effective as from 1 January 2008 and the proposed action plan for implementing the new statutory requirements.

Members considered the new statutory requirement concerning the publication of Corporation and committee business. Members reviewed the requirements to keep commercially sensitive business confidential with particular reference to business conducted by the Campus Development Committee.

Members went on to consider the proposed amendments to the Corporation's Standing Orders as presented and circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Members discussed the proposal made by one its members that the Standing Orders should be amended to provide that members should be permitted to claim travel expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Corporation and its committees. This further amendment was discussed by members and put to a vote by show of hands. The Chair stated that there was a majority vote in favour of the amendment which would be subject to approval of an administrative procedure to be put in place to allow the claims to be subject to audit.

IT WAS RESOLVED to:

- **note the content of The Further Education Corporations (Former Further Education Colleges) (Replacement of Instrument and Articles of Government) Order 2007 which came into effect on 1 January 2008;**
- **note that the procedure for seeking nominations and appointing a further student governor is being implemented;**
- **approve the action plan for the implementation of the new statutory requirements;**
- **approve that the business of the Campus Development Committee shall be classified as “confidential” with the requirement that the Corporation Search Committee review and make recommendations concerning the release of the Campus Development Committee’s papers, including minutes of its meetings, on an annual basis;**
- **approve the Corporation’s Standing Orders as amended and presented at the meeting, subject to further amendments being made to:**
 - **paragraph 20.1 (to permit members to claim for travelling expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Corporation and its committees);**
 - **paragraph 31.4 (to clarify the meaning of the wording “mutatis mutandis”).**

01/06/08 Financial Statements 2007/08 TO 31 December 2007

The Director of Finance and Administration presented the financial statements to 31 December 2007 which showed –

- closing bank balance £1,869,000 (original forecast £1,655,000);
- projected operating surplus of £252,000 and historical cost surplus of £354,000 against original forecasts of £266,000 operating surplus and £368,000 historical cost surplus;
- projected bank balance as at the year end is £1,027,000 (original forecast £1,095,000);
- Current ratio of 1.5:1 in line with the forecast reduction to 1.31:1 at the year end due to the Campus Development expenditure;
- Closing bank balance is forecast to be £1,002,000
- the training restaurant up by £200 compared to previous year to date, down £3,000 against budget;
- the nursery on a par with the previous year to date, £2,000 below budget ;

In answer to questions the Director of Finance and Administration informed members that the £80,000 salary payments positive variance is due to the fact that some staff vacancies have arisen during the year which have not been immediately filled. He informed members that the closing bank balance forecast of £1,002,000 will be kept under review in view of the minimum £1 million balance requirement for the bank loan arrangements.

IT WAS RESOLVED to:

- **receive and approve the financial statements to 31 December 2007;**
- **require that the Finance Committee shall, at its next meeting, review the financial performance of the Training Restaurant.**

02/08 THE CHANGING FE LANDSCAPE – RESPONDING TO THE NEW AGENDA

The Deputy Principal/Director of Studies delivered a presentation informing members of an overview of current developments and issues impacting on the FE sector including specific reference to :

- The Learning and Skills Council’s Annual Statement of Priorities 2008/09 to 2010/11;
- Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills Report “World Class Skills; Implementing the Leitch Review”;
- New funding Methodology for 2008/09;
- The Learning and Skills Council’s Policy Summaries 2008/09;
- FE Reform White Paper, “Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances”; and
- Further Education and Training Act 2007.

Members considered and reviewed proposals concerning the core areas of the College's provision to be offered in response to the changing agenda namely:-

- **Young People**
- 14 to 16 – Future strategy and partnerships with schools, including support for the new diplomas
- 16-18 provision - Future strategies for development and organisation of this key area of the college, including response to new opportunities for apprenticeships and partnerships;
- Strategy options to address the priority area for young people in the NEET group within the local area
(i.e. the 16-19 year olds currently not in education employment or training)
- **Adults**
- Strategic options and implications of the new division of adult work into Adult Responsive and Employer Responsive strands, including skills development, contestability and partnerships
- **Higher Education**
- Future strategy for expansion of Foundation Degrees and opportunities for development of partnerships with Higher Education Institutions
- **Adult Safeguarded Learning**
- Whole college approach to Adult provision for personal development, learning for leisure and ESOL;

Members considered various proposals and options for the way in which provision throughout the College and its subsidiary company may be directed and the qualifications to be offered within each of the core areas.

Members directed that the proposals will incorporate a number of overarching strategies:-

- that the Board recognises the need for the College to be more outward facing with regard to the provision of the new requirements including the continuance and forging of new partnerships in order to fulfil the vocational and training requirements;
- that 14-16 inclusion is a requirement but this requires careful management;
- that emphasis shall be placed on the support and creation of apprenticeships both in the 14-19 and adult schemes;
- that the culture of A-level provision shall be maintained but that the organisation shall be focussed as a cohort;
- that the NEET provision shall be included but requires careful management;
- that the Further Education aspects shall be developed to include Foundation degrees which may or may not be "stand alone".

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the presentation and to direct that the senior management team (following consultation with staff) present detailed proposals, with regard to the implementation of the strategy to develop the core areas, to members at a full day Corporation meeting to be held at the end of April /beginning May 2008 (date to be arranged).

Lunch was taken at this point.

Margaret Simon and Simon Field left the meeting at this point.

03/08 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

The Director of Quality presented the College's Quality Improvement Strategy 2007 – 2010. Members were informed that the Quality Improvement Strategy as presented placed priority the needs of the learner with the aim of ensuring learner entitlement whilst contributing to the pursuance of the College's mission and values and its response to internal and external challenges.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and approve the College's Quality Improvement Strategy.

04/08 STRATEGY AND PLANNING FOR OFSTED INSPECTION

The Director of Quality gave a presentation to members detailing the College's strategy and planning for its forthcoming inspection. He highlighted the changes which had taken place in the inspection process in the period since the last full inspection which took place in 2004 and gave members an update on the planning and preparation for the Governors meeting with the inspectors.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the presentation and request that the Director of Quality enters into direct training of the Governors' team.

05/08 CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Director of Marketing and Operations presented the paper informing members of the effect which the reorganisation of the Learning and Skills Council has had on the schedule for its approval of the funding of the new build programme. She went on to inform members of the progress of the plans and the build schedule for the construction of the Nursery which is scheduled to commence in April 2008.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to support as necessary the early build of the nursery.

06/08 SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS

The Chair of the Corporation thanked the Deputy Principal for his presentation highlighting the issues and challenges facing the College as it goes forward. He emphasised that this process was a fundamental review addressing the requirement for change and he directed the senior management team to progress the development of the proposals in readiness for detailed review by members at a special meeting of the Corporation to be held at the end of April / beginning of May 2008, with implementation of the initial stages of the change programme being put into effect in September 2008.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded after Part B business at 4.00 p.m.

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(Chair)

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Chair's approval: 3 February 2008
Corporation approval: 20 March 2008