

SOUTH CHESHIRE COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2008 AT 2.00PM AT WYCHWOOD PARK HOTEL

Present:

K Lea (Chair of the Corporation)
V Harris (Vice-chair of the Corporation)
D J Collins (Principal and Chief Executive) (until the point shown)
J Bache
C Blanchard
J Dowell
J Dwyer
F Ellison
G Fyffe
R Jones
S Utting
S Yates

In attendance:

M Snell (Retired Principal, Brockenhurst College) (until the point shown)
G Bebbington (Director of Finance and Administration)
N Peet (Director of Curriculum Support and Operations) (from the point shown)
P Swift (Deputy Principal and Director of Studies) (from the point shown)
E Davies-Jones (Clerk to the Corporation)

The Chair welcomed John Bache and Francis Ellison to their first Corporation meeting as members.

Item

63/08 FORMAL MATTERS

63/01/08 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Wheeler and Margaret Simon

63/02/08 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. John Dwyer's interest as a member of Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council, as previously declared at Corporation meetings, was noted

63/03/08 Approval of Minutes of the Part A Meeting held on 18 July 2008

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the Part A meeting held on 18 July 2008 be approved as a true and accurate record of that meeting and that the Chair sign them accordingly.

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Matters arising

Minute No: 52/08

Report: Review of ventilation systems

The Chair informed members that this matter would be considered at a later point in the meeting.

There were no other matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting which were not dealt with as part of the agenda items for this meeting.

64/08 NEW PRINCIPAL – RECOMMENDATION OF THE SELECTION PANEL

The Chair welcomed Mike Snell to the meeting and thanked him formally on behalf of the Selection Panel members and the members of the Corporation for his involvement in supporting the Selection Panel in the process of interviewing the candidates for the role of Principal.

Mike Snell congratulated the Board on the rigorous and robust process of selection which had been fairly conducted throughout.

The Chair, representing the Selection Panel of members who had interviewed the candidates and considered the presentations of the three candidate who had reached the final shortlist, informed members that there had been a selection of strong candidates and excellent presentations. He went on to inform members that the Selection Panel had deliberated and were recommending that the Corporation appoint Peter Swift as Principal Designate as from 1 January 2009.

IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Peter Swift as Principal Designate with full operational authority from 1 January 2009 until 31 July 2009 and as Principal from 1 August 2009 following the retirement of David Collins on 31 July 2009.

Mike Snell left the meeting at this point and the Deputy Principal/Director of Studies joined the meeting at this point

The Chair formally congratulated Peter Swift on his appointment as Principal Designate.

The Chair also thanked the Director of Organisational Development for the excellent programme which she had put in place for the selection of the new Principal

The Director of Curriculum Support and Operations joined the meeting at this point

65/08 2008/09 OPERATIONAL PLAN UPDATE

The Principal presented the paper providing a detailed report on the progress towards achieving the organisation's strategic objectives. He informed members that the College is making good progress implementing the action plan.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

**66/08 MATTER ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING:
MINUTE NUMBER 52/08 REPORT ON VENTILATION SYSTEM**

The Director of Curriculum Support and Operations presented the paper informing members that the college has a number of air conditioning systems in areas where the occupancy is high or there is a concentration of PCs or other heat generating systems requiring refrigeration to maintain a comfortable working temperature. He informed members that all the units are dry conditioning as opposed to evaporative condenser types. He informed members that maintenance measures are in place to safeguard against infection from water borne bacteria.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report

67/08 DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

The Director of Curriculum Support and Operations presented the paper providing members with the second annual update on the progress against the planned developments agreed in

December 2006. The report provided details of the actions which had been completed and those ongoing actions which have been embedded. He informed members that he was satisfied that the scheme was working successfully.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

68/08 REPORTS OF THE CHAIR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES

68/01/08 Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that, in addition to his involvement in the process of the selection of the new Principal, in the period since the last report given in July 2008 he had taken action on two matters which had arisen and on which action needed to be taken in advance of the Corporation meeting being held. The Chair of the Corporation Finance Committee had been informed and given written agreement to the actions and members had received copies of the proposed actions prior to those actions being taken. The Chair asked that the Corporation give its formal approval of the actions taken. He went on to inform members that he had, for the third time, attended the Association of Colleges Annual Conference in Birmingham during the previous week. He informed members that the Principal's contribution as President of the Association of Colleges was to be commended. He went on to give members a brief summary of the event and the information and signals which had been forthcoming from the conference speeches.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to approve the actions taken by the Chair namely:

- ***the action dated 14 October 2008 with regard to agreeing the terms of the bank loan; and***
- ***the action dated 23 October 2008 to conclude the contract for the purchase of Edleston Road Primary School***

68/02/08 Report of the Chief Executive

The Principal presented his report to the Corporation detailing issues which would affect strategic planning for the college's future and the structural adjustments to be made in the management team following the appointment of the new Principal. He went on to inform members that:

- the enrolment numbers for 16-19 year olds have exceeded the target for the year 2008/09 and that adult numbers are also on target to be achieved;
- all budgets remain on track as reported to the Finance Committee with the exception of a lower level of borrowing than anticipated due to the later start of the main building project;
- the arrangements for accommodation whilst the new build project is undertaken have been working extremely well; and
- examination results were once again at a high level with A level results again exceeding a 99% pass rate and similar 90% pass rates in almost all vocational areas. Detailed action plans for improvement were in place for courses which fell below national benchmarks.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

68/03/08 Report of the Campus Development Committee

The Chair presented the paper informing members of the matters which the Campus Development Committee had dealt with during the term. Members had received copies of the minutes of the three meetings of the committee which had taken place on 24 September, 14 October and 14 November 2008. He informed members that although the contract with the main building contractor had not yet been signed, there were no disputes that the Committee were aware of and it was expected that the contract would be signed very shortly. He informed

members that it was proposed that a side letter to the contract would deal with some minor amendments to the Employers Requirements.

The Chair informed members that a robust modification control system was to be used throughout the build programme with the prior approval of the Campus Development Committee being required for any modification which had cost implications.

The Chair referred members to the approval of Chair's Action concerning the arrangements for the bank loan had been approved earlier in the meeting(ref: Minute No 68/01/08).

The Director of Curriculum Support and Operations informed members that he had received notification during the meeting that all the pre-commencement planning conditions had been discharged and that the building work could commence according to plan on 1 December 2008. He informed members that a ground breaking ceremony was to take place on 1 December with the Mayor and the local MP invited to attend. The Director of Curriculum and Support informed members that the only members invited to attend were the members of the Campus Development Committee. The Chair directed that the invitation to members should be extended to all members of the Corporation.

The Chair informed members that negotiations for the sale of the land to the residential developer were still ongoing and that every effort was being made by the College and the Land Agent, acting properly and efficiently, to conclude the agreement at the price which had been tendered by the developer earlier in the year.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

68/04/08 Report of the Audit Committee

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the report informing members of the matters which had been considered by Audit Committee members at the meeting held on 9 October 2008 . He informed members that the Committee had received and considered the Internal Auditor's draft annual report and the report of the Director of Finance and Administration concerning the college's controls for securing value for money. The Committee had also considered the updated Fraud Policy and Whistle blowing Policy recommending that the Corporation approve the polices with contact details updated. The Committee also recommended that the Corporation approve the continuation of the procedure for dealing with requests for information made under the Freedom of Information legislation and that the Corporation adopt the new Model Publication Scheme for College of Further Education, as published by the Information Commissioner, effective from 1 January 2009.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive this report and:

- ***note the Committee's advice that the College's controls for securing value for money are considered to be effective;***
- ***approve the continuation of the updated versions of Fraud Policy (SCCPOL 029) and the Whistle blowing policy (SCCPOL 23);***
- ***approve the proposal that the arrangements for publication of papers (SCCPOL 033 : Freedom of Information – dealing with requested for information) should continue and that the Model Publication Scheme for Further Education as published by the Information Commissioner, should be adopted as from 1 January 2009; and***

68/05/08 Report of the Finance Committee

The Chair of the Finance Committee, presented the report informing members of the matters which had been considered by Finance Committee members at the Committee's meetings held on 23 October 2008 when the following annual reports were received by the Committee:

- Energy Review
- Student Numbers 2007/08

- Capital Replacements
- Bad and Doubtful Debts

The Chair went on to inform members that the Committee had received a very enlightening and detailed analysis of the college's recruitment figures. The Committee had also received a report detailing the performance of the subsidiary company against the two agreed key performance indicators of profitability and return on assets employed.

Members were informed that, following the meeting of the Finance Committee, the financial statements auditors had sent their management letter, dated 26 November 2008, confirming that the College's operating surplus for the year 2007/08 was £210,000 prior to FRS 17 provision. Members considered the payment of the discretionary bonus of £250 to College staff, excluding the members of the senior management team who have separate performance related arrangement. Members were informed that the amount of this discretionary bonus payment had been provisionally allocated in the College budget which had been approved for the year.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive this report and to approve the payment of a discretionary bonus of up to £250 be made to each member of staff, subject to previously approved eligibility criteria, excluding the members of the senior management team who have separate performance related arrangements.

68/06/08 Report of the Organisational Development Committee

The Chair of the Organisational Development Committee presented the report informing members of the matters which had been considered by Organisational Development Committee members at the meeting held on 23 October 2008 which included receipt of the following annual reports:

- Health and Safety
- Critical Incident
- Equality and Diversity (Staff)
- Staff Disciplinary & Grievances Procedures
- Staff Sickness
- Staff Development & training
- Protocol National (Agency Staff)
- Race Equality Action Plan 2008-2011 – progress to date

He drew members' attention to the recommendation put forward by the Organisational Development Committee that the Corporation approve the continuation of the PruHealth "Essential Plus" private health care scheme as from 1 December 2008.

Members also considered the Committee's recommendation concerning the approval of the following policies and procedures:

- the continuation of the following policies unchanged : SCCPOL 034 – Age Equality in Employment and SCCPOL 05 – Critical Incident Policy
- the amended policy/procedure SCCPOL 08 – Dealing with the death of a student;
- the amended staff handbook policy – Harassment and Bullying

The Chair then went on to inform members that at the Committee meeting held on 23 October 2008 the Committee had been assured that the premises at Edleston Road were alarmed and secure but following the meeting this had been found to be a misleading report. The Director of Curriculum Support informed the Corporation that the information given to the Committee on 23 October had been given to the best of his knowledge at that time. In answer to members' question he informed the Corporation that as far as he was aware the building was now secure with the alarm system in place. The Chair advised that if the Director of Curriculum Support and Operations was unsure of the status it was better to say "I do not know but I will find out" than to be positive but subsequently in error.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to:

- ***approve the continuation of the PruHealth "Essential Plus" private healthcare scheme as from 1 December 2008;***

- **approve that the policies SCCPOL 034 “Age Equality in Employment” and SCCPOL 05 “Critical Incident Policy” SCCPOL 28 continue in the current format until the next cycle review date unless a change in circumstances requires a review at an earlier date;**
- **approve that the policy/procedure SCCPOL 08 “Dealing with the death of a student” continues with the job titles updated;**
- **approve the amended staff handbook policy “Harassment and Bullying”;**
- **require that the Director of Curriculum Support prepare and present a report to the Corporation on 12 December 2008 detailing the position with regard to work carried out and completed at Edleston Road as at 27 November and a separate report detailing work to be undertaken at the premises from 28 November 2008 onwards.**

68/07/08 Report of the Search Committee

The Chair of the Search Committee, presented the report informing members of the matters which had been considered by Search Committee members at the meeting held on 23 October 2008 and in particular the recommendations put forward by the Search Committee for consideration by the Corporation.

Members considered the re-appointment of Ron Jones as a member of the Corporation following the completion of his initial one year term of office on 24 January 2009.

Members did not require that Ron Jones should leave the room whilst his appointment was considered.

The Search Committee had, at its meeting on 23 October 2008, considered the available data including attendance records and the value of this member’s expertise and experience and concluded that, in the light of his attendance, commitment, contribution and experience, the committee recommended to the Corporation Board that Ron Jones be re-appointed for a further term of office of four years commencing on 25 January 2009.

The Chair informed members that the Committee had considered the responses received from members of the Corporation to the self assessment questionnaire and recommended that the Corporation approve the development plan as presented.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report and to –

- **to reappoint Ron Jones as a member in accordance with Clause 2(1)(a) of the Instrument of Government for a period of 4 years commencing 25 January 2009; and**
- **approve the following aims for Corporation Development Plan for 2008/09:**
 - **further review of the format of Corporation/ Committee meetings;**
 - **further development of a programme to recruit more members with relevant business/industrial experience;**
 - **continue to increase the level of understanding of new issues arising as a result of government initiatives; and**
 - **to hold a one day meeting with the new Principal in September 2009 for the purpose of “scenario planning**

68/08/08 Report of the Quality and Standards Committee

The Chair of the committee, presented the report informing members of those matters which had been considered by Quality and Standards Committee members at the meeting held on 13 November 2008 including:

- data on Student Retention and Attendance for the year ending 31 July 2008;
- details of complaints and accolade received by the College during 2007/08;
- the progress in concluding the current programme of governor visits to Faculty areas;
- the following annual reports:
 - Careers Team;
 - Student Work Experience;
 - Student Attendance ;
 - Academic Appeals;

- Student Destination Analysis;
- Classroom Observations;
- Equality and Diversity (Students);
- Advice Service; and
- Counselling Service.

Members' considered the recommendations put forward by the Quality and Standards Committee concerning the approval of college policies.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive this report and to:

- **approve the College's Disability Statement 2008;**
- **approve the Financial Support for Students SCCPOL 10**
- **approve that the policies SCCPOL 20 "Student Disciplinary Code"; SCCPOL 21 "Student Harassment and Bullying"; SCCPOL 30 "Management of Student Assignments" and SCCPOL 31 "Student Attendance Policy" continue in the current format until the next cycle review date unless a change in circumstances requires a review at an earlier date;**

68/09/08 Report of the Clerk

The Clerk reported the details of members' attendance records for 2007/08 as required by the attendance policy adopted by the Corporation at its meeting held on 6 December 2001. Members reviewed the College's Register of Interests & Receipt of Gifts & Hospitality detailing the interests and receipt of gifts/hospitality which have been declared by :

- (i) members of the Corporation ; and
- (ii) staff employed by South Cheshire College who hold positions with significant financial responsibilities;

Members were informed that in addition to the annual update the register is updated throughout the year as and when individuals notify the Clerk of any new interests or changes to interests which are noted on the Register.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive this report and to:

- **note attendance at meetings to date in 2008/09;**
- **receive the College's Register of Interests**

69/08 SOUTH CHESHIRE ENTERPRISES LIMITED

Following the approval of the staffing plan and business proposals of South Cheshire Enterprises Limited at the Corporation meeting held on 18 July 2008 (Ref Minute Number: 54/05/08) members were informed that the recruitment agency engaged to recruit a new Managing Director had received 164 applications for the position and that a meeting to shortlist the long list of candidates would take place on Friday 28 November 2008 with interviews of shortlisted candidates taking place on Thursday 4 December 2008.

IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Simon Yates, Ron Jones, Vic Harris and Peter Swift to form the selection panel to interview shortlisted candidates and to make recommendations concerning the appointment of a new Managing Director, to the Corporation on 12 December 2008.

IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED to request Simon Yates agree a date with Stan Cowell, following his retirement as Deputy Principal on 31 August 2008, when the Corporation will host a meal to thank Stan Cowell for his contribution and loyal service to both the College and the subsidiary company.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded after Part B confidential items at 4.05 p.m.

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(Chair)

Production: 4 December 2008
Chair's approval: 10 December 2008
Corporation approval: 16 January 2009