

SOUTH CHESHIRE COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL CORPORATION/SMT RETREAT HELD AT CRANAGE HALL HOLMES CHAPEL ON FRIDAY 16 JANUARY 2009 COMMENCING AT 9.00 AM

K Lea (Chair of the Corporation)
V Harris (Vice-chair of the Corporation)
J Bache
C Blanchard
P Bowie
J Dowell
J Dwyer
F Ellison
G Fyffe
R Jones
C Lamont
S Utting
T Wheeler
S Yates

In attendance:

P Swift (Principal Designate)
G Bebbington (Director of Finance and Administration)
D Harwood (Director of Quality and Marketing)
N Peet (Director of Curriculum Support and Operations)
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

01/09 FORMAL MATTERS

01/01/09 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from David Collins and Margaret Simon.

01/02/09 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.

01/03/09 Appointment of Student Governor

Members were informed that the procedure for seeking nominations had been repeated in December 2008 as there was a vacancy for a student member. One nomination had been received and members considered the nomination of Ryan Booth for the position of student governor.

IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Ryan Booth as a student member for a term of office ending 31 July 2008 and that Ryan Booth be appointed as a member of the Quality and Standards Committee during that period.

01/04/09 Approval of Part A Minutes of Meeting held on 27 November 2008 & the Part A Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 December 2008

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2008 and the minutes of Part A of the meeting held on 12 December 2008 be approved as a true and accurate record of those meetings and that the Chair sign them accordingly.

Matters Arising:

Minute No: 68/06/08: Edleston Road

The Director of Curriculum Support and Operations presented the paper informing members of work undertaken at Edleston Road following its acquisition in August 2008. He informed members that the detailed costs of the works undertaken would be presented to the next meeting of the Campus Development Committee. He confirmed to members that the security of the Edleston Road site was now on a par with the Dane Bank site.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the report.

01/05/09 Financial Statements 2007/08 TO 31 December 2007

The Director of Finance and Administration presented the financial statements to 31 December 2008 which showed –

- closing bank balance £1,004,000 (original estimate £1,096,000 with £3m borrowings);
- projected operating deficit of £429,000 and historical cost deficit of £327,000 against original forecasts of £466,000 operating loss and £364,000 historical cost loss;
- projected bank balance as at the year end is £1,005,000 with £11,650,000 borrowings (original forecast £1,081,000 with £12,300,000 borrowings);
- Current ratio of 1.02:1 due to the new build payments prior to the bank loan drawdown;
- Closing bank balance is forecast to be £1,043,000
- the training restaurant up by £400 compared to previous year to date, down £2,000 against budget;
- the salon turnover is on a par with last year and with this year's budget;
- the nursery on a par with the previous year to date, £5,000 below the increased target for this year;

In answer to questions the Director of Finance and Administration informed members that a fixed interest rate of 5.23% had been agreed for the long term bank loan (compared to the interest rate included in Financial Plan of 5.6%) and the interest rate for the flexible loan had been agreed at 2.1% for the period December 2008 to end July 2009.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and approve the financial statements to 31 December 2008.

02/09 THE COLLEGE – STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The Principal Designate reviewed the content of the paper which had been prepared by the Principal and which had been circulated to members in advance of the Corporation meeting held on 12 December 2008. The Principal Designate reviewed the content of the paper and emphasised the volatility and uncertainty surrounding future funding by the Learning and Skills Council. Members considered the key considerations and resulting operational issues as set out in the paper, namely : the machinery of government changes; finance; curriculum provision; curriculum support; estates; staffing; improvement of quality; marketing; the role of the subsidiary company and relationships with other organisations.

03/09 THE COLLEGE – FUTURE DIRECTION & STRATEGY

The Principal Designate led the session focusing discussion on the key themes that had been identified by members at the Corporation meeting held on 12 December 2008. Discussion during the presentation focused on future direction and strategy for provision of: 16-18 year olds; 14-16 year olds; higher education provision; 19+ adult learner provision; employer engagement; and apprenticeships.

Members agreed that policy must encompass:

- provision of 14-16 programmes;
- development of the apprenticeship programmes; and
- a flexible approach to the provision of courses on commercial terms by the college and its subsidiary company, South Cheshire Enterprises Limited.

Members considered that the senior management team should develop the proposals as presented and provide members with advice and direction on the:

- development of the 14-16 provision;
- development of apprenticeships both in the 14-19 and adult schemes;
- maintenance of a high quality A-level and vocational provision;
- inclusion and management of NEET provision;
- development of employer engagement both in the public and private sector;
- development of the relationship and differentiation of provision between the college and its subsidiary company; and
- continue development of the opportunities to deliver Higher Education.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the presentation and to direct that the senior management team should advise and provide further direction to members at a full day Corporation meeting to be held on Thursday 14 May 2009.

04/09 FRAMEWORK FOR EXCELLENCE – UPDATE

The Director of Quality and Marketing gave a presentation to members detailing key aspects of the Government's new performance assessment framework for colleges. He outlined the scope and structure of the framework and provided members with an overview of the assessment criteria and the way in which results are to be analysed and reported under the framework.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the presentation and require the Director of Quality and Marketing to provide a further update to members at the Corporation meeting on 24 July 2009

05/09 WEB 2 – THE COLLEGE'S PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Director of Curriculum Support and Operations gave a presentation to members focusing on the development and use of the internet for the purposes of teaching and learning. He provided members with examples of the way in which the web is being accessed and used as an interactive resource by learners. He emphasised that the developments and opportunities offered by this resource must not be ignored and that work is being undertaken by the college to incorporate and extend the use of the internet for the purposes of teaching and learning within the college.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the presentation and note its position in the future build.

06/09 FEEDBACK: CERTIFICATE AND DIPLOMA IN COMPANY DIRECTION

John Dwyer provided members with a verbal feedback report following his attendance on a pilot project which had been run by the Institute of Directors and sponsored by the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL). He informed members that he felt that the course had been of

benefit to him and that at the end of the programme all the participants had indicated that they would recommend the programme to their fellow governors subject to affordability, time commitment and modification of the course content to meet the specific requirements of the FE sector. He informed members that CEL is exploring a range of alternative funding models in order to test their viability with the aim of developing a sustainable model.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive the feedback.

07/09 SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS

The Chair of the Corporation thanked the Principal Designate for the wide-ranging presentation. He also thanked members for their contributions to the discussion of the issues surrounding the future direction of the college's provision. He directed the senior management team to progress the development of the proposals, to present to members at a special meeting of the Corporation to be held on Thursday 14 May 2009 in order for members to review the priorities and make or confirm decisions as to future direction and strategy.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded after Part B business at 4.55 p.m.

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(Chair)

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