

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 23 APRIL 2008
IN ROOM F12 AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT COLLEGE

Present:	Dr Bob Smith	Chairman
	Mr Peter Conway	
	Dr Nick England	
	Ms Ruth Grimmer	
	Ms Tina Harris	
	Mr Rodney Ireland	
	Mrs Debbie Lavin	Principal
	Miss Heather Pullen	Teaching Staff Governor
	Mr John Pulsford	
	Mr Paul Roberts	Support Staff Governor
	Mr Peter Shaw	

In Attendance:	Miss Carol Bliss	Interim Finance Director
	Mr Brian Bowker	Clerk to the Corporation
	Ms Lynne Christopher	Assistant Principal – Strategic Planning
	Mr Nigel Mason	Director of Client Services
	Mr Peter Thompson	Assistant Principal – Resources
	Mr Roland White	Assistant Principal – Curriculum
	Miss Fidelma Washington	Acting Director of Workforce Skills and Offender Learning

Apologies:	Ms Sarah Dry	Student Governor (Family)
	Dr David Wake	(Holiday)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this St George's Day meeting.

ACTION

65/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Dr Bob Smith informed Members that he had stepped down from his role as a Non Executive Director of the Prospects Services Group and therefore had no interest to declare. Dr Nick England declared an interest as the Head of Ryde School and Peter Shaw as Head of Downside Middle School.

66/08 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH 2008

Members received the Non-Confidential, Confidential and Staff Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on the 26 March 2008.

The Chair of Corporation informed Members that he had made two changes to the non confidential Minutes that did not affect the content but improved the clarity. The presentation of the Staff Confidential Minutes would also be amended.

Subject to these amendments the Corporation APPROVED the minutes of the meeting on the 26 March 2008.

67/08 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 26 MARCH 2008

It was noted that all matters arising had been addressed.

68/08 COMMITTEE MINUTES**CAPITAL PROJECT COMMITTEE**

The Chair updated Members of progress since the last Corporation meeting, including approval by the IOW Council of the Outline Planning Application for the new project. He congratulated all staff involved, in particular Lynne Christopher and Derek Kingsland. He informed Members that three companies have expressed an interest in tendering for the project and that the Principal would be delivering a formal presentation on the project to the Regional LSC Panel on 15th May. It was noted that the local LSC remain positive about the College's Application.

The Corporation NOTED the Capital Project Committee Minutes

SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Search & Governance Committee provided Members with a brief update on progress relating to interviewing applicants for the vacant Governor posts. She indicated that she was liaising with the Director of Client Services regarding the vacant Student Governor position.

The Chair reminded Members that Corporation Meeting Minutes, and those of its Committees, would be published on the internet on a quarterly basis.

The Corporation NOTED the Search & Governance Committee Minutes.

RG**69/08 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

The Chair updated Members on progress in appointing a new Finance Director and informed them of the Interim Director of Finance's decision not to apply for the post. His thanks to Carol Bliss for her excellent and continuing work were endorsed by other Members of the Corporation.

70/08 CORPORATION STRATEGY MEETING: 21 MAY 2008

The Principal informed Members that the key focus of the meeting would be to address the major strategic issues and the rapidly changing educational agenda, including higher education. She stated that future funding arrangements are a significant area of concern.

It was agreed that the meeting would start at 2.00 p.m., preceded by a buffet lunch at 1.30 p.m. The meeting would run until 6.30 p.m., with the first 3 hours devoted to major strategic items and the last 1½ hours given over to standard Corporation business.

The Corporation AGREED the matters to be covered in the 21 May Governor Strategic Planning Half Day

71/08 ISLAND EDUCATION REFORMS

It was noted that there had been no significant new developments.

6TH FORM DEVELOPMENT

It was noted that developments will be progressed later this year.

72/08 MONITORING OF THE OPERATIONAL PLAN

The Assistant Principal – Strategic Planning took Members through the agenda paper. She reminded them that in previous years the College had been required to produce a Development Plan for the LSC, which had been monitored by Corporation. However, this year, the College has produced in its place an Operational Plan which details the targets, milestones and actions to be taken to achieve the strategic aims and objectives set out in the College Three-Year Strategic Plan.

She informed Members that the £950K of Exceptional Funding Support has now been spent on the agreed items. She also explained that the Plan is divided into four sections; Quality; Institutional Growth; Resources and Staffing. She stated that the main challenges were presented by, Work Based Learning and Train to Gain; modernising support systems; harmonising Pay Scales; job evaluation; Investors in People and the IWIGTS Transitional Plan.

She stated that the report provided a comprehensive review of all College strategic aims and the overall progress is positive. The Chair referred to the reduction in support staffing and the challenges generated by the College's action in this area. He also asked that the IWIGTS Plan be addressed by Corporation in the Autumn term and the College Pay Policy in December 2008.

The Assistant Principal – Strategic Planning stated that the next update of the Plan would be carried out in June 2008 and it was agreed that the Corporation would monitor the Plan on an annual basis with its next consideration in April 2009.

A discussion took place regarding:

- national attendance benchmarks
- male/female achievement rates
- the new Diplomas
- the need for the College to collaborate with other institutions.

The Corporation NOTED monitoring of the College Operational Plan.

73/08 VAT / MULTI SKILLS / DELAMITE

It was agreed that this item would be carried forward to the next meeting.

CB

74/08 GOVERNOR LINKS

The Assistant Principal – Curriculum took Members through the Agenda paper and indicated that its purpose was to consider the need for formalised links between the Corporation and areas of operational activity in the College and how these may be clarified and strengthened.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding:

- the potential benefits of a skills match between a particular Governor and their linked area
- the need for clear criteria to ensure that the Governor role and staff expectations were clear
- the benefit of Governor participation in SAR Validation Meetings
- the potential for more informal meetings with staff.

The Chair summarised the discussion by stating that Governors need to have a more visible presence in the College, that some links work well and there was no desire to curtail the successful links, that SAR involvement is very well received by Governors and that there was a need for the Assistant Principal – Curriculum to review and revise his proposals, based on the Corporation discussion and develop clear guidelines and criteria for the link role.

RW

The Corporation AGREED to further develop the Link Scheme with a view to its implementation later this term..

75/08 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal informed Members that the College had been awarded full certification for New Standard, that the Beacon Award Ceremony for COOL-spot held on Monday evening of this week had been successful and that the College had obtained a positive outcome to a recent Industrial Tribunal. She also reiterated that the proposed new LSC funding arrangements were of great significance to the College and that further discussion on this would need to take place at the May Governor Strategic Planning Half Day.

The Corporation NOTED the Principal's Report.

76/08 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT

The Interim Director of Finance took Members through the report. She highlighted that the operating results for the College (excluding the Exceptional Support Funds and the New Build Costs), show a surplus for the year to date of £326,623 against a year to date forecast of £312,385 giving a positive variance of £14,238. She stated that there is New Build Net Expenditure of £299,478 which was not budgeted for. She also reiterated that Work-Based Learning and Train to Gain remain an area of concern. A positive feature was that the College had last been in an overdraft situation in May 2007 but since then the cash flow has been monitored rigorously and has remained in a positive balance. It was noted that LSC Approval for the overdraft facility of £1.25m was required by the end of May 2008.

The Chair raised a question regarding the Non Pay Savings and the Interim Director of Finance reassured Members that this was not having a negative impact on the curriculum. The Principal reminded the Governors of the need to comment on the revised presentation format of the accounts and they agreed the format was clearer.

The Corporation CONSIDERED/NOTED the Monthly Finance Report.

77/08 STUDENT FEES AND DEBTORS REPORT

The Interim Director of Finance took Members through the report which was designed to show the College's debt management performance over the last three years. She provided background information, including remission of fee details, student fee invoicing arrangements and the College Fee Policy. The areas of fee collection, invoicing, receipting and debt collection were also covered.

The Interim Director of Finance expressed her confidence that outstanding debts would be collected by the end of the current academic year. The Chair reminded Members that new systems and staff had been introduced into the Finance Department, partially to address the current situation but there was clearly more progress yet to be made. A request was made by the Teaching Staff Governor for early distribution of any new Fees Policy and Procedure to enable staff to give their full support to the new systems.

A question was asked regarding the issue of duplication of invoices and systems issues and whether this had been identified to Corporation before. The Principal stated that it had and stressed the importance of this area of work, indicating that the position was now much clearer than before but that the situation needs to be addressed for next year, because there is potential for further claw back when new LSC Procedures are implemented. The need to follow up corporate debtors was also stressed.

The Corporation NOTED the progress in debt collection.

78/08 TEACHING AND LEARNING STUDENT SURVEY 2008

The Assistant Principal – Strategic Planning took Members through the report which was designed to inform the Governors of the outcomes of the Teaching and Learning Survey for 2008. Members were informed that the Survey was issued for all courses, full-time and part-time and that some different questions were used in the questionnaires for learners aged 14-16. She indicated that the results for 2007/2008 have remained high and that the results for “I like coming to College” are above the National Rating Benchmark for the first time and equal to the National Percentage Benchmark. The most improved responses in the Survey related to “I use computers to help me learn”, up from 79% to 83% and “Helped to Identify Career/Education Choices” up from 77% to 81%.

She stated that issues remain with learners from minority ethnic backgrounds where there are lower levels of satisfaction across most topics and with Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities who are less satisfied in every topic area when compared to the overall response rate for all learners. Members were informed of the actions to be taken to address areas of concern within the Survey.

The Chair drew attention to the worrying comments relating to the College Refectory and the Principal was asked to include reference to this in her next report to Corporation.

Principal

The Corporation NOTED the results of the Teaching and Learning Student Survey 2008.

79/08 SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT QUESTIONNAIRE (SARQ)

The Interim Director of Finance took Members through the report and asked them to approve the SARQ relating to Financial Management and Governance. She indicated that the questionnaire is in two parts, with Part A focusing on requirements on the College under Statute or LSC Requirements. Part B presented a checklist of indicative questions that the College address when assessing the overall effectiveness of its Financial Management and Governance arrangements. She reported that the College was late this year in dealing with the SARQ and that it would be replaced by the Framework for Excellence format in the next academic year. The importance of the document was highlighted by the Principal.

It was agreed that the Audit Committee would also review the Self Assessment Report Questionnaire and that it would be put on the portal.

CB/Clerk

The Corporation APPROVED the Self Assessment Report Questionnaire.

80/08 CALENDAR OF CORPORATION MEETINGS

Members were asked to consider the proposed dates for Corporation and Committee meetings for the 2008-2009 Academic Year. The Clerk was asked to include the September start of academic year date to the calendar and also include the SAR validation period and then to e-mail the draft Calendar to all governors for comment. The Calendar would be given final approval at the June Corporation meeting.

Clerk

The Corporation CONSIDERED the draft Calendar of Corporation Meetings.

81/08 APPOINTMENT OF FINANCE DIRECTOR

The Chair took Members through the arrangements for the appointment of the Finance Director and asked for approval for these arrangements for selecting a substantive Finance Director. He outlined progress to date regarding the long listing procedure, which had involved Protocol – National Recruitment Consultants and the short listing process involving himself and the Principal. He gave notice of

an Extraordinary Governors Meeting to be held to approve the individual selected following the interview process.

The Corporation APPROVED the Selection Arrangements (1-3) outlined in the paper and AGREED to the Special Meeting of the Corporation following the clear recommendation of the Selection Panel.

82/08 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk to the Corporation presented his report and drew attention to the liquidation of Hampshire and Solent Learning Hub. He highlighted that there was no ongoing financial or reputational risk to the College.

Members NOTED the Report.

83/08 COLLEGE AND GOVERNOR EVENTS

Members were given advance notice of the Student Awards Ceremony on the 2 July 2008.

The Corporation NOTED the Report.

84/08 ANY OTHER NON CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Members were asked to consider a tabled report relating to College Bank Accounts/Cheque Signatories. The Interim Director of Finance recommended that the new Senior Finance Staff be formally approved as cheque signatories.

The Corporation APPROVED the College Accountant as a Level One Bank Signatory and the Management Accountant as a Level Two Bank Signatory.

85/08 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 21 May 2008. Strategic Planning meeting 2.00 p.m. (preceded by buffet lunch at 1.30 p.m.). Regular Corporation business meeting to commence at 5.00 p.m.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____

MISSION STATEMENT
Putting Students First
Working for Employers
Raising Community Aspiration