

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting held at 2.00 pm on 10 July 2009

Present: J Bloomfield (to item 13) C Manning
R Carter E Milburn (Chairman)
S Cook J Roberts
P Dickie (from item 7) E A Williams (Principal)
J Finn R Windsor
S Gerber
K Golding
A Gordon-Stables (to item 13)
D Hills

In attendance: D Howells (Deputy Principal)
P Thirkettle (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality)
M Wagner (Vice Principal, Student and Business Services)
M D Fell (Corporation Secretary)

Members confirmed that they had no interests to declare in respect of any items on this agenda.

Action

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Miss S Leggo, Mr R Millea, Mr J Simmonds and Mr B Smith.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2009 were confirmed and signed.

3. Matters arising

Student accommodation – it was noted that the potential

developer of student accommodation had been referred to UCS and no progress had yet been reported.

The possibility of exploring some form of joint provision with accommodation at West Suffolk Hospital was suggested for examination.

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4. Search Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Search committee held on 9 June 2009 were received and noted

5 Governance Issues

A report on a range of issues relating to governance was received.

i Membership

The Governors noted that the Search Committee had considered the contribution and attendance of the members whose appointments were due to expire in July and had also reviewed the balance of membership by reference to the Skills Audit. The Committee's recommendation that Mr Carter, Mr Golding, Mr Gordon-Stables and Mr Simmonds should be offered appointments for a further four year term from 1 August 2009 was approved (proposed by E Milburn, seconded by J Finn).

MDF

ii Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair(s)

The proposals of the Search Committee for revised arrangements for the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair were reviewed. It was agreed that the provision for the automatic appointment of a second Vice Chair had not developed as envisaged and it was agreed that this should be discontinued. It was recognised that the inclusion in the Standing Orders of discretion for the Chair to nominate a second Vice Chair was not strictly necessary, as this could be dealt with by specific resolution at the time. On balance, however, it was agreed that there was merit in including this provision in the Standing Orders and the proposal was approved.

It was agreed that in future, there would be a procedure for the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair whereby written nominations would be sought at the April/May meeting and that if more than one nomination was

received, there would be secret ballot at the July meeting to confirm the appointment.

The terms of office of the Chair and Vice Chair were agreed at three years, although the possibility of varying the term of either office by one year would be available in order to avoid both positions becoming vacant at the same time. (Proposed by S Gerber, seconded by J Bloomfield).

iii Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference

The Governors reviewed the Standing Orders and Terms of Reference of Committees which included amendments to reflect the withdrawal of the automatic appointment of a second Vice Chair and the election arrangements and terms of appointment for the Chair and Vice Chair.

It was agreed that the Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference should be approved as presented, subject to the incorporation of some textual amendments proposed by Mr Gordon-Stables (proposed by S Gerber, seconded by J Bloomfield).

MDF

iv Committee Membership and Faculty Links

Governors' membership of committees and members' links to Faculties were reviewed and it was agreed that no changes were necessary for 2009-10.

6 FE Strategic College Forum

The minutes of the meeting of the FE Strategic College Forum held on 26 June 2009 were received and noted.

The Governors were very disappointed at the lack of progress with development by the Local Authority of a transport policy to provide a framework for the new curriculum delivery in schools and colleges. It was hoped that progress would be reported at the meeting on 26 September.

7. Members' Reports on Representational Activities

J Finn reported on issues raised at the LSC Regional Council which had mainly concentrated on the situation concerning capital programmes and the transition from LSC to the new organisational structure.

Betty Milburn reported on the recent meeting of the ACER Chairs and Governors meeting, which had included a

consultation session as part of the review of governance and strategic management of the sector.

8 2008-11 Strategic Plan and 2009-10 Operational Plan

The Strategic Plan for 2008-11 and the Operational Plan for 2009-10 were received. Some minor amendments had been made to the Strategic Plan and these were reviewed and agreed.

The Operational Plan for 2009-10 presented for Governors' information was noted.

9 Accommodation Strategy Committee and Finance Committee

The minutes of a joint meeting of the Accommodation Strategy and Finance Committees held on 30 June 2009 were received. Arising from the minutes, it was agreed that in view of the forthcoming election, the invitation to the opposition spokesman for FE to visit the College should be pursued, even though it was now clear that it would not be possible to affect the outcome of the capital project application.

EAW

10 Buildings update

A report was received that outlined the present situation in the light of the confirmation that funding was not to be available for the building developments envisaged in the Accommodation Master Plan. Investigation of the feasibility of a range of options was now being undertaken and a report would be made to the next meeting.

It was noted that construction of the remaining section of the rear access road and erection of a sound proofed fence on the eastern boundary of the campus, were to be undertaken during the summer.

DJH

11 Quality Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Quality Committee held on 3 July 2009 were received. It was noted that the Committee had identified an additional risk to those listed, which was to ensure that the SAR process continued to be robust.

The Committee considered that a questionnaire combining a model used by UCS with the one used by the College for

the development needs assessment would be an appropriate means of conducting the self assessment of governance. It was agreed that a draft of the combined questionnaire would be prepared for consideration by the Governors in October.

PT

12 Curriculum and Quality Report

A report of current issues relating to curriculum and quality issues was received.

It was noted that a part-time degree programme in Construction Management was being developed for employees of Carters Ltd and it was hoped that this would be validated in time for a start in September 2009.

13 Student Governors' Report

Ryan Windsor reported on current issues from student representatives and arising from the report it was noted that colour printing facilities were currently available in the library, by request to the library staff.

It was confirmed that investigations were being undertaken with the intention of identifying suitable bike shelters to encourage increased cycle use.

DJH

14 Partnership Report

A report was received that provided details of partnership activity in 2008-09 and it was noted that this had been very close to the budgeted level.

The Governors reviewed and approved the proposed partnership provision for 2009-10 (proposed by S Gerber, seconded by J Finn).

15 Principal's Report

The Principal's report was received and the following matters arose:

- i UCS – it was noted that Bob Anderson was retiring from his post as Pro Vice Chancellor of UCS on 1 September 2009. It was agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to Mr Anderson on behalf of the Governors.
- ii Prizegiving – the Governors agreed that the Prizegiving event had been particularly successful this year and asked

that their thanks be conveyed to the staff involved with its organisation.

- iii Key Facts – it was agreed that the data in the key facts publication be reviewed from a marketing perspective, to develop a version for promotional purposes.

MW

16 HR Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2009 were received and noted.

17 Pandemic Flu

A report was received that outlined measures that had been considered in anticipation of a possible pandemic outbreak of flu. It was confirmed that a communications strategy was being developed to ensure that there was an appropriate response as the situation developed.

18 Business and Student Services Report

A report of current issues relating to Business and Student Services was received and the following matters arose:

- i Train to Gain – the Governors were concerned at the implications of the introduction by LSC of new phasing of Train to Gain funds, which would have a significant impact on the recruitment of new learners at certain times of the year.

19 Finance Report

The finance report for May 2009 was received and the Governors were pleased to note that a surplus in excess of budget was forecast at year end.

20 Budget 2009-10 and Three Year Financial Forecast

The draft budget for 2009-10 and a report outlining the key assumptions on which it had been based, was received. It was noted that the budget proposals had been considered in detail by the Finance Committee and the Committee had recommended the budget to the Governors for approval. It was noted that because insufficient information had been available on future funding, the three year forecast had not

been examined by the Finance Committee and it was proposed that this should be presented to the next meeting for approval.

The Governors were anxious that arrangements be made to safeguard the surplus generated from any future requirements of government that surpluses be returned, as it was considered to be essential for these to be available for future capital investment.

The Governors agreed that the budget for 2009-10 should be approved as presented, with a projected surplus of £977,000 and that the three year forecast would be reviewed at the next meeting (proposed by D Hills, seconded by S Gerber).

21 Audit Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 8 July 2009 were received.

The Committee considered that further work was necessary on Risk Maturity and this was likely to lead to the raising of the profile of the risk management process with both managers and Governors.

22 Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan 2009-10

The Governors received and approved the Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan 2009-10, on the recommendation of the Audit Committee, subject to the amendment of the audit of Marketing to Business Development. (Proposed by S Cook, seconded by R Carter).

23 Appointment of Auditors

The appointment of auditors for 2009-10 was considered and it was agreed that Baker Tilly and Bentley Jennison should each be appointed for a further year, subject to there being no increase in the audit fees over the current year.

24 Annual Review of the Risk Register

A report of the highest rated risks on the College Risk Register was received; the Governors considered that the Risk Management Report was appropriate and that the College continued to be fully compliant with the

recommendations of the Turnball report.

25 Internal Audit of Governance

The report of the internal audit of governance was received and the Governors were pleased to note that no issues of significance had been identified. The involvement of a number of members in completing interviews or a questionnaire as part of the audit was agreed to have been a positive initiative and it was suggested that the possibility of combining this questionnaire with the governance self assessment questionnaire be investigated.

MDF

26 Health and Safety Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 11 June 2009 were received and noted.

27 Health and Safety Policy

The Governors reviewed and approved the College's Health and Safety Policy for 2009-10.

28 Performance Indicators

The performance indicators for May 2009 were received and noted.

29 Members' reports of training, development and Faculty link activities

Richard Carter and David Hills reported on School SAR meetings that they had attended. They had been very impressed with the process and the outcome of the courses evidenced by student results which were outstanding.

Richard Carter also commented on the extremely high standard of work displayed by students at the end of year art shows.

Governors were invited to attend the Graduation Ceremony at the Cathedral on 26 September.

The meeting closed at 5.10 pm

