

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting held at 2.00pm on 5 February 2010

Present:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| J Bloomfield | C Manning |
| R Carter | E Milburn (Chairman) |
| S Cook (from item 6) | R Millea |
| J Finn | J Roberts |
| S Gerber | J Simmonds |
| K Golding | B Smith |
| A Gordon-Stables | E A Williams |
| S Leggo (from item 8) | R Windsor |

In attendance:

- D Howells (Deputy Principal)
- P Thirkettle (Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality)
- M Wagner (Vice Principal, Student and Business Services)
- M D Fell (Corporation Secretary)
- I Mathers (Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator) (for item 8)
- E Durand (Marketing Manager) (for item 11)
- E Dupuy (Web Developer) (for item 11)

The meeting was preceded by a presentation by Neil Reader, Sports Academy Manager, outlining the range of provision offered with the Academy.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Dickie and Mr D Hills and for late arrival from Mr S Cook and Ms S Leggo.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2009 were confirmed and signed.

Action

3 Matters arising

- i Financial Audit – it was noted that an audit review meeting had been held with Baker Tilly and it was expected that as a result, measures would be introduced by the auditors to ensure that the difficulties experienced with the recent audit should not recur.
- ii CML Building
It was noted that the conditions to be satisfied prior to finalising the purchase of the CML building had not been met, and for the time being, the purchase was now on hold.

4 Members reports of representational activity

Betty Milburn reported on a meeting of Chairs of Committee that had been held primarily to review the format, content and frequency of meetings. It had been agreed that the use of presentations was valuable in raising awareness of members, and also that occasional seminars on specific issues should be continued. The length of agenda, and some reports, were agreed to be too long and suggestions to manage both had been proposed. It had been noted that some IT training had been requested by a member of Governors and it was proposed that a group session would be arranged in the next few weeks.

The use of Governor representatives for particular areas eg Equality and Diversity was recognised to be rather informal at present and the Search Committee would be asked to review arrangements for appointment, terms of reference and means of feedback to the Governors.

Jo Finn reported on the recent meeting of the Regional LSC Council and summarised the main issues covered.

5 Suffolk Colleges FE Strategic Forum

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2010 were received and noted.

It was suggested that consideration should be given to inviting Neil Watts, Suffolk County Council School Improvement Service, to contribute to a future meeting.

The College's representatives on the Forum agreed that the meetings were now more focussed than had been the

MDF

case, and were serving a valuable purpose in developing relationships with the County Council.

6 16-19 Statement of Priorities and Investment Strategy 2010-11

A report summarising the key points in the LSC's Statement of Priorities and Investment Strategy 2010-11 were received. It was noted that since preparing the report, the College's funding allocation for 16-19 had been received, and overall, it appeared that provision for an additional 127 students would be expected, for net additional income of 0.5-1%.

7 Principal's Report

The Principal's Report was received and the following issues arose:

- the Governors were concerned that there appeared to be inconsistencies in the strategies being put forward by SFA and EEDA, notably in the provision and funding for the public sector and with adult apprenticeships.
- the budget allocation for 2010-11 represented a significant reduction, which although unwelcome, was known to be a cut of a much smaller scale than in a number of other colleges in the region.
- it was confirmed that formal approval had now been given to the proposals to create an Academy in Thetford.

8 Equality and Diversity

Ian Matters, Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator joined the meeting to provide an update on current activity within the areas of Equality and Diversity, together with a report of progress made against the action plan for 2009-10.

The Governors noted that inspectors had apparently questioned the practice in some colleges of reporting equality and diversity issues to committees rather than the full Board. It was agreed, however, that the detailed monitoring reports were more appropriately dealt with at committees, with the higher lever policy issues being considered by the board.

It was requested that examples of good practice should be identified and made available on the Staffnet site.

Although it was difficult to identify consistent patterns of performance between different minority groups over years, it was noted that a project was underway for discussions to be held with students from a range of minorities to seek to understand any particular issues or difficulties that they may encounter.

The Governors agreed that those with links to Faculties would include equality and diversity issues within their discussions with staff when they visited the Faculties. It was also requested that a reporting framework be developed so that there was a clear understanding of what would be reported at each level.

IM

9 Curriculum and Quality

A report on current issues relating to curriculum and quality was received. Arising from the report:

- the Governors were pleased to note that the validation of the BA Hons Sports Coaching had now been approved.
- it was agreed that the Part B 2008/9 SAR should be reviewed and agreed for submission by the Quality Committee.

10 Partnership Provision

A report of current partnership activity was received and noted.

11 Business and Student Services

A report of current activity related to Business and Student Services was received and noted.

Martyn Wagner with Emmanuelle Durand and Erica Dupuy gave a presentation on the College's website development strategy.

12 Accommodation Strategy Update

An update on issues relating to accommodation was received. The Governors were disappointed to note that significant evidence of unstable asbestos had been confirmed by survey and that as a result, the proposed purchase of the CML building had been put on hold. The present indications were that the owners were not intending to carry out remedial work, and it was agreed

that unless removal was completed, the College should withdraw its interest in the building. It was requested that the College's solicitors be asked to write to the owners to make clear the conditions that the College would need to be satisfied before proceeding further.

DJH

13 Student Governors' Report

Sarah Leggo reported on an apparent problem with a lack of recognition of the Foundation Degree for progression to some university programmes. It was recognised to be a real problem, particularly for students who had understood that there would be progression possibilities. It was agreed that the situation should be fully explained to students at the start of courses and the course to which progression could take place should be highlighted.

PT

Ryan Windsor passed on a request from students for there to be more student events at the College, and that events should be better publicised.

Other feedback from students related to difficulty with car parking, and the lack of publicity for flexible payment arrangements, car sharing etc. It was agreed that the development of a car sharing scheme via Student Net or Facebook would be investigated.

MW/PT

It was confirmed that although discussions with UCS were continuing, it was not anticipated that it would be possible in the near future to make progress with the provision of accommodation for students on HE courses.

The possibility of providing a PC with network access in the HE Common Room would be investigated.

DJH

14 Finance Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 26 January 2010 were received and noted.

15 Finance Report

The Finance Report for December 2009 was received and noted.

16 Risk Management

An update of current activity on risk management was received. It was noted that the update of the risk register would be completed early next month.

17 Performance Indicators

The performance indicators of student numbers and funding were received and noted.

18 Members' Reports of Training and Development etc

Rob Millea reported on a very interesting visit to the Business and Services Industries Faculty that he and Paul Dickie had attended and Alan Gordon-Stables reported on a meeting held with representatives of students. He also reported feedback from two students who had been supported through the West Suffolk Educational Trust, and suggestions for the format for an event to promote and raise funds for the Trust, that the students were proposing to hold in May, were invited.

The meeting closed at 5.10pm