

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

### **GOVERNING BODY**

#### **Minutes of the meeting held at 2.00pm on 6 February 2009**

**Present:**

E Milburn (Chairman)	J Bloomfield (To item 11)
R Carter	E A Williams (Principal)
S Cook	R Millea
P Dickie	C Manning
S Gerber	B Smith
A Gordon-Stables	D Hills
R Windsor	S Leggo
J Finn	

**In attendance:**

D Howells	Deputy Principal
P Thirkettle	Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality
M Wagner	Vice Principal, Student & Business Services
M D Fell	Corporation Secretary

The meeting was preceded by a presentation by Ray Robertson, the College's E-learning Manager, on current initiatives on 'Transformational Learning' through further development of facilities within StudentNet.

#### **1 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr K Golding, Mr J Roberts and Mr J Simmonds.

#### **2 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2008 were confirmed and signed, subject to the addition of Mr R Millea to the list of those present (Minute book page L284).

#### **3 Matters arising**

**WS Educational Trust** – It was noted that the formulation of the Trust had now been completed, but it was agreed that it would not be appropriate in the present financial climate to launch the fundraising campaign. The Governors group co-ordinating this initiative would keep the situation under review.

#### **Action**

#### **4 Membership**

The Governors confirmed the appointment of Ms Sarah Leggo as the second Student Governor, on the nomination of the Student Council and Ms Leggo was welcomed to her first meeting.

#### **5 Members' reports of representational activities**

It was noted that the planned meeting of the LSC Council had been cancelled owing to bad weather. Betty Milburn reported on the recent meeting of the Strategic Forum. Concerns had been raised about School and College transport, and the increasing number of students with mental health problems. It was noted that the Forum was to be restructured with the Colleges chairing meetings on an annually rotating basis with West Suffolk College taking responsibility from the next meeting on 27 March with Betty Milburn as Chair.

#### **6 Governors' Conference**

It was agreed that the recent Governors Conference had been most successful and governors recorded their thanks to members of the Senior Management Team for their guidance and support. The action plan and a summary of the members' evaluation comments were received and noted (Minute book pages L293-296). It was suggested that the newly created Leaders' Forum (which was to replace the Regional Assembly) might be an appropriate body through which to work to raise awareness of FE matters with the elected representatives.

#### **7 Operational Plan update**

An update on the implementation of the action plan arising from the 2007/08 Operational Plan was received (Minute book pages L297-299) and the Governors were pleased to note the very satisfactory progress made. They asked that future reports be by exception wherever possible.

#### **8 Accommodation Strategy Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2009 were received and noted (Minute book pages L300-302).

## 9 **Buildings Update**

An update on the present situation concerning accommodation issues was tabled (Minute book pages L302-303). Arising from the report:

- (1) a summary of the conditions imposed by the Borough Council associated with the planning consent was noted.
- (2) confirmation of the guaranteed minimum price for Phase 1 was now expected on 4 March.
- (3) the Governors agreed that the Application in Detail for Phase 1 of the building project should be sent to LSC, in a total sum of £35.51 million + VAT (proposal by R Millea, seconded by J Finn).
- (4) there was currently a lack of clarity as a result of the financial climate affecting both the terms of loan finance and the level of capital support available from LSC, which was assuming that tender prices were to fall.
- (5) it was proposed that the construction of the nursery building should now proceed, but it had not been included in the tender exercise that had been undertaken for the main project. Legal advice had been sought and it had been confirmed that it could be added to the main project without a further tender and it was agreed that a contract with SDC should be prepared for formal approval at the April meeting, subject to confirmation of the price and funding availability. (Proposed by R Millea seconded by S Gerber).
- (6) St Edmundsbury Borough Council were seeking formal agreement to the College's contribution to the residents' parking scheme, which was one of the Section 106 conditions attached to the planning consent. The Governors agreed that the agreement should be entered into, with a set up cost of £31.900 and an annual cost until completion of the project of £25,173 and that it should be confirmed by application of the College seal authenticated by the Chair and the Principal. (Proposed by R Millea, seconded by S Gerber).

**10 Business Development & Student Services Report**

A report of current issues relating to Business Development and Student Services was received (Minute book pages L304-307). The Governors were very pleased to note the excellent recruitment performance reported with Train to Gain provision. The Governors were concerned at the substantial increase in the number of students needing specialist support for significant personal issues. This was also understood to be the case in other colleges and it was proposed that the situation be reviewed at the next meeting of Principals.

**11 Principals Report**

The Principal's report was received (Minute book pages L308-310) and the following issues arose:-

Haverhill Competition – The Governors were pleased to note the positive developments now being made towards the creation of a Trust in Haverhill; it was noted that the detailed bid had to be submitted by 23 March.

**12 Finance Committee**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 27 January 2009 were received and noted (Minute book pages L311-313).

**13 Finance Report**

The finance report for December 2008 was received (Minute book pages L314-324) and the Governors were pleased to note the continued favourable performance against budget.

**14 Curriculum and Quality Report**

A report of current issues relating to curriculum and quality was received and noted (Minute book pages L325-329).

**15 College 2007/2008 Self Assessment Report**

A report was received (Minute book pages L330) and it was agreed that Part B of the College SAR should be reviewed by the Chair of the Quality Committee for uploading to the LSC Gateway prior to final approval of the Quality Committee.

**16 Partnership Report**

A report of current activity with partnerships (previously referred to as Franchises) was received and noted (Minute book pages L331-334).

**17 Student Governors' Report**

There were no issues to report at this stage, as there, as there had not been a meeting of the Student Council so far this term.

**18 ILT Strategy**

An update report on progress with implementation of the ILT Strategy was received (Minute book pages L335-338) and the Governors were impressed at the pace of development against a range of projects. It was requested that further updates be provided in due course. It was suggested that an evening session be held for Governors to explore the IT facilities that were currently available.

**19 Freedom of Information Act**

A report was received (Minute book pages L339-356) that summarised changes introduced recently by the Information Commissioners Office, under which all colleges were required to adopt a new Publication Scheme, based on a model scheme that had been developed for the sector.

The Governors reviewed and approved the draft College scheme as presented. (Proposed by J Finn, seconded by A Gordon-Stables).

**20 Risk Management**

An update on the latest risk management assessment was received (Minute book pages L357-359) , which highlighted those risks which were considered to have the greatest likelihood and impact. It was noted that the detailed register was regularly reviewed by the Audit Committee and the Governors were confident that the risks were being managed appropriately.

**21 Governors' Papers**

The means of producing and Governors' agenda papers was discussed. It was agreed that those members who would prefer to continue to receive electronic papers should notify the Clerk. It was agreed that Netbook computers would be provided to members to avoid the need to bring printed papers to meetings.

**22 Performance Indicators**

The performance indicators for December 2008 were received and noted (Minute book pages L360-363).

**23 Members' reports of training and development activities**

There were no matters to report.

The meeting closed at 4.55pm