

C(09)M1

**Minutes of the seventy-fifth meeting of the
Corporation
held on Tuesday, 24th March 2009 at 18.30hrs**

Members present: Dr S Claridge (Chair)
Mr W Archibald
Dr M Bateman
Mr D Burns
Ms E Emms
Mr M Fairhurst
Mr P Hopkins
Mr J McDougall (Principal)
Mr M Nickbakhsh (Except for minute 77)
Ms P Thorn (Except for minute 77)
Mr D Todman
Mr D Wood (Except for minute 77)
Ms F Yoward (Except for minute 77)

By invitation: Ms H Groves (Student Support Administrative
Assistant) (Except for minute 77)

In attendance: Mrs B Billings (Clerk to the Corporation)
Mr G Blagdon (Director of Finance and Corporate
Services) (Except for minute 77)
Ms L Nicholls (Assistant Principal) (Except for minute
77)
Ms L Siddall (Deputy Principal)

51-08/09 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr O Davies,
Ms S Hopkins and Ms H Oliver.

52-08/09 Corporation Membership

The Corporation noted that Laura Adshead and Jess Derbyshire had recently been elected the new Student Members of the Corporation and their terms of office would commence on 1 April 2009. The Corporation agreed to record a vote of thanks to Mr Dominic Wood and Ms Freya Yoward, the outgoing student Corporation members, for their invaluable services during their period of office.

53-08/09 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2008 (C(08)M7) were approved and signed as a correct record.

54-08/09 Actions Taken or Outstanding

The Corporation noted a report on actions taken or outstanding following recent meetings (C(09)1).

55-08/09 Report of Corporation Committees

The Corporation noted a report on the activities of its Committees during February 2009 (C(09)2) and agreed the following actions:

- (a) To approve the College retention and achievement targets for 2008/09 as recommended by the Quality, Standards and Planning Committee;
- (b) To approve the interim internal audit report – risk management, as recommended by the Audit Committee; and
- (c) To note the minutes of the Committee meetings.

56-08/09 Health and Safety

The Director of Finance introduced and the Corporation noted the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 11 March 2009 (C(09)3). In response to questions the Director of Finance outlined how the evacuation procedures dealt with the absence of marshals on any given day; how the evening evacuation procedures differed from those utilised during the day and stated that examination evacuation procedures also existed and had been used successfully fairly recently.

57-08/09 Principal's Report

The Corporation noted a report from the Principal covering the College activities between 1 December 2008 and 27 February 2009 (C(09)4). In introducing the report the Principal highlighted the events and activities which illustrated the richness of the College's curriculum.

58-08/09 College Development Plan – Progress Report

The Principal introduced and the Corporation noted a progress report regarding the College's Development Plan 2008/9 to 2010/11 (C(09)5). It was commented that growth in student numbers was resulting in accommodation issues for the College and also had implications for the revenue budget, especially if the College was not reimbursed some of the costs associated with its capital projects Application in Principle. One Corporation member suggested that it could become necessary for the College to consider the introduction of a cap on recruitment.

59-08/09 Monthly Management Reports – 1 August 2008 to 31 December 2008

- (a) The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee introduced and the Corporation noted the Monthly Management Reports from 1 August 2008 to

31 December 2008 (C(09)6). During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- (i) Although these reports were in a new format, this format was still to be developed further. The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee sought comments from the Corporation members on the new format and the general view was supportive. He suggested that if necessary a training session could be held with regard to interpreting the management reports. It was agreed that the College should continue with this format at the present time;

Action: The Director of Finance

- (ii) Examination fee income had increased but, subject to a small administrative charge by the College, this income was forwarded to the examinations boards;
 - (iii) The College catering department was likely to produce a small profit this year;
 - (iv) Due to the current economic climate the College's liability in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme was likely to increase at the next actuarial valuation. The actuaries had quoted a fee of £2.5k to answer any queries in relation to their valuations; and
 - (v) Given the Government's recent decision to put a freeze on all college capital projects, the College was now uncertain as to when, or indeed if, it would receive any reimbursement for the fees it had incurred during the preparation of its capital projects Application in Principle (AiP). These costs did not appear in the balance sheet as they had already been dealt with as items of revenue expenditure.
- (b) The Director of Finance introduced and the Corporation noted a document showing a revised cash flow for the College for 2008/09 (C(09)7). During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:
- (i) As a result of uncertainties surrounding the reimbursement of the fees incurred preparing the Application in Principle and a reduction in income from Spring Training, the College's current overdraft facilities would not be sufficient to meet its commitments during March and April 2009;
 - (ii) The cash flow showed that if £317k Skills Centre AiP fees reimbursement was received by the College in June 2009, by the year end the College would have a surplus of approximately £231k; and
 - (iii) In response to a question it was reported that the College made every effort to pursue its debtors and that at the present time the amount of debtors represented approximately £6k.

- (c) The Corporation agreed the following:
- (i) That the Skills Centre Income line (just over £317k) should be removed from the cash flow;
 - (ii) Subject to the amendment agreed in (c) (i) above, to approve the revised cash flow;
 - (iii) That every effort should be made to ensure that at the year end of 31 July 2009 the College was in a breakeven position; and
 - (iv) To approve that the College's overdraft facility be temporarily extended to £650k until the end of May 2009 but that every effort should be made to keep the College's actual overdraft as low as possible.

Action: The Director of Finance

60-08/09 Capital Projects

The Principal gave an oral update on matters concerning the College capital projects. During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- (a) Just before Christmas the Government had decided to freeze all college capital projects, this was as a result of concerns that the allocated budget had been considerably overspent. A review of the situation was currently underway;
- (b) The Principal had met with the LSC in January 2009 to discuss the implications of the Government's decision and this meeting had not resulted in any real assurances regarding the College's projects;
- (c) The vendor of the land Fulfood Road had now withdrawn from the negotiations and was likely to place the land back on the open market;
- (d) The Principal tabled a letter he had received from Sion Simon (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Further Education), dated 23 March 2009, about the decision by the LSC to suspend approval of further capital projects;
- (e) There was now a great degree of uncertainty with regard to the College's capital projects; especially given the fact the College was a considerable way down the queue in relation to the LSC approvals process and that the Government review could result in significant changes to this process and how projects were prioritised or funded;
- (f) There could be opportunities for the College in relation to the possibility of a Leigh Park Academy and the Principal had set out in principle his support for this venture;

- (g) The Principal had discussed these matters with David Willetts MP, who continued to take the Government to task over the issue of the freeze in capital projects and several questions had been raised in the House of Commons; and
- (h) The Principal was hopeful that the College would receive reimbursement of some of the fees incurred preparing its Application in Principle but feared that it may be at a lower intervention rate than previously anticipated.

61-08/09 Summer Works 2009 and Temporary Accommodation

- (a) The Director of Finance gave an oral report on the proposed summer works programme for 2009 and temporary accommodation and the Corporation noted a document on the costs associated with the temporary accommodation (C(09)8). During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:
 - (i) Another temporary building to provide additional social space for the students was required but had not been included in the costs in document C(09)8;
 - (ii) The temporary classrooms might be located on the south side of the College's Sports Hall; and
 - (iii) It was hoped that planning permission would not be an issue with regard to the temporary buildings.
- (b) The Corporation agreed to support in principle the acquisition of these temporary buildings (providing six classrooms and one social space), up to a cost of approximately £125k per annum. The Finance and General Purposes Committee was given delegated authority to approve the final proposals which would be brought back to the next Corporation meeting for information.

Action: The Director of Finance

62-08/09 Financial Management and Control Evaluation (FMCE)

The Corporation approved, as recommended by the Audit Committee, the draft version of the College's Financial Management and Control Evaluation (C(09)9).

Action: The Director of Finance

63-08/09 Accounting Policies - FRS 17 Update

The Corporation noted an update on FRS 17 issues (C(09)10).

64-08/09 The Full Time Student Learner Experience

- (a) Mr D Wood (Student Corporation Member) gave a presentation on the work of the Students Union over the previous year. He outlined the membership of the Students Union; the reasons for its success (including a good President, good job descriptions, enthusiastic officers and good staff support) and

problems with a couple of uncommitted members. He then went on to detail the more successful events during the year (Leavers Ball, BBQ, Charity Week, Red Nose Day and Battle of the Bands) and the two least successful events (Freshers Party and Christmas Ball, the latter being cancelled due to a dearth of ticket sales). He concluded by announcing the new membership of the Students Union and mentioning a small group that had been expressing anti Students Union sentiments.

- (b) The Corporation agreed to record a vote of thanks to Mr Wood for his presentation.

65-08/09 College Quality Strategy

The Deputy Principal introduced and the Corporation approved the College Quality Strategy (C(09)11).

66-08/09 College Learner Involvement Strategy

The Deputy Principal introduced and the Corporation approved the College Learner Involvement Strategy (C(09)12).

67-08/09 Report of the Quality Performance Review Group (QPRG)

The Corporation noted the minutes of recent meetings of the Quality Performance Review Group (QPRG) held on 5 November 2008, 10 December 2008 and 28 January 2009 (C(09)13).

68-08/09 Corporation Targets 2008/09

The Corporation noted a progress report regarding the Corporation's targets for 2008/09 (C(09)14).

69-08/09 Risk Management Action Plan 2008/09

The Corporation noted the latest version of the Risk Action Plan 2008/09 (C(09)15).

70-08/09 Investors in People (IiP)

The Corporation noted that the College had been successful in its application for reaccreditation under the IiP Scheme and had been reaccredited for a further three years.

71-08/09 Corporation Annual Conference

The Corporation reviewed its Annual Conference held at Langrish House on 6 and 7 February 2009. The Chair reported that the event had cost just over £2k (£2,487.20). It was agreed that the event had been very successful and should be held at the same venue and with a similar format on 5 and 6 February 2010. The Corporation thanked those staff involved with the organisation of the event.

Action: The Clerk

72-08/09 Linked Governor Scheme

The Corporation gave consideration to a paper on the linked governor scheme (C(09)16). The Corporation approved the action plan detailed in paragraph 2 of C(09)16 and agreed to amend the protocol as detailed in the appendix to the paper.

Action: The Clerk

73-08/09 Register of Interests and Statements of Eligibility

It was noted that the annual updates, for 2008/09, of the Corporation's Register of Interests and Statements of Eligibility had now been completed.

74-08/09 The Corporation's Annual Report

The Corporation discussed the preparation of an Annual Report. The Corporation agreed to produce a Report in the same format as that produced in previous years.

Action: The Clerk

75-08/09 The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007

The Corporation noted a briefing paper, originally presented to the Corporation in March 2008, on the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.

76-08/09 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 9 July 2009 at 18.30 hrs (possibly preceded by a training session at 18.00hrs).

77-08/09 Staff Matters

See confidential minute.

1(b)
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G:corporation/minutes/C(09)M1