

MOULTON COLLEGE FEC

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation Board Held on Wednesday 30th April 2008

Part 1

Present: Mr C Alderson-Smith (in the Chair), Mr J Gaggini, Mr A Merriman, Mrs K Mackaness, Mr P Heygate, Mr C Barney, Mrs C Boardman, Mrs J Charlton-Jones, Mr A Hewitt, Mr B Knight, Mr R Thompson, Mr M Thomson, Mr C Moody, Ms A Gofton, Mr J Newton, Mr A Ellis, Mr S Steward, Mr O Garofalo

In Attendance: Mr M Andrews, Mr M Wilkinson, Mr G Davies, Mr J Mair, Mr J Wilsdon

08/1 Apologies for absence (agenda item 1)

Apologies were received from Mr R Sadler.

08/2 Declarations of Interest (agenda item 2)

Mrs Boardman declared an interest in any items concerning Daventry District Council and Northamptonshire County Council. Mr Heygate declared an interest as a supplier to the College and in the establishment of a northern ring road. Mr Hewitt declared an interest as a board member of Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd and in his firm acting for several landowners who had made representations about the proposed Northampton expansion. Mr Thomson declared an interest as his firm carried out work for the College from time to time.

08/3 Minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2007 (agenda item 3, paper A)

The minutes were approved as true and correct record.

08/4 Matters arising (agenda item 4)

There were no matters arising.

08/5 Appointment of Governors and co-opted members (agenda item 5)

The Board had been seeking a nomination of a Governor and a co-opted member of the Academic Standards Committee from the University of Northampton. They had nominated John Hoskinson, one of the 3 pro-Vice Chancellors, to become a Governor. He had been at the University for a year. Prior to that he had worked at the University of Liverpool following an Army career. *His election was proposed by John Gaggini, seconded by Chris Barney and approved unanimously.*

Paul Heygate had completed his current term of office. His re-appointment was recommended by the Search Committee. *His re-election was proposed by Catherine Boardman, seconded by Karen Mackaness and approved unanimously.*

Tony Merriman would complete his current term of office in July and was not eligible for re-appointment. However, as a Governor with over 20 years experience

and who was currently involved with the East Northants Academy and in the search for a new Farm Manager, the Search Committee were keen to retain his experience and proposed that he be co-opted for a further 2 years. *This was proposed by Chris Barney, seconded by Brian Knight and approved unanimously.*

The Board had also been seeking two co-opted members for the Academic Standards Committee. Professor Peter Bush, a pro-Vice Chancellor, had been nominated by the University of Northampton. Graham Patrick, the Director of Quality Improvement at Landex and a former inspector, had also agreed to join the committee. *Their appointment was approved unanimously.*

08/6 Instrument and Articles of Government (agenda item 6, paper B)

The revised Instrument and Articles had come into force on 1st January 2008. Major changes were outlined and, following discussion, *the revised Instrument and Articles were adopted.*

The revised Instrument and Articles required the minutes of each Committee to be published on the college website. As the Personnel and Resources Committees reported to F&GP rather than directly to the Board, their status as sub-committees not requiring the publication of minutes on the website *was confirmed.*

08/7 Health and Safety (agenda item 7, paper C)

The report was discussed. The inspection regime had been changed recently and weekly inspections were now carried out by each resource manager and reported to the Health and Safety Officer. This had raised the awareness of health and safety and issues were now being dealt with more quickly than before. The number of accidents had declined from 51 to 44 per 1,000 students during the last year. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/8 Equality and Diversity (agenda item 8, paper D)

The report was discussed. The Group was confident that no issues of discrimination were present in College. The results for students from different ethnic backgrounds had been analysed and showed virtually no differences. Following the discussion, *the report was noted.*

Mike Andrews left the meeting.

08/9 Ofsted Inspection (agenda item 9, paper E)

Inspection was now a risk based process and, as the College had been judged provisionally to be very good or outstanding, it would receive an inspection by 2 inspectors on 7th and 8th May. There would also be an audit of governance and management by the LSC as part of the inspection. The programme was outlined and discussed, together with the LSC's preliminary judgement of the College which had been sent to Ofsted. The inspectors would be meeting 5 Governors. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/10 Academic Board (agenda item 10, papers F and G)

The minutes of the meetings held on 20th February and 16th April 2008 were presented for information. No matters were raised.

08/11 Summary Self-Assessment Report (agenda item 11, paper H)

This was the front section of the SAR which had been brought to the last meeting and subsequently loaded onto the LSC website. It would form the key document for inspection and the inspectors would seek to validate the judgements in it. The key strengths of the College contained in the SAR were discussed. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

08/12 SAR Development Plan (agenda item 12, paper I)

This document would show the inspectors the progress made towards dealing with areas for improvement identified in the SAR. It also showed the assessment of the impact of each measure taken. Good progress was currently being made. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

As this was Jeremy Wilsdon's last meeting before leaving the College, the Chairman thanked him for his contribution and wished him well for the future. Jeremy Wilsdon then left the meeting.

08/13 New Developments – work in progress (agenda item 13)

a) Large Animal Veterinary Practice

The project was due for completion on 7th June. It was about 1 week behind schedule but the contractors hoped to make this up. Oakham Veterinary Hospital would be appointed to run the veterinary practice. They were a long established practice specialising in horses and small animals and were well known for their work with performance horses. They would link well with the College's Therapy Centre. The Centre would expose students to a wide range of therapies not seen in other colleges. The Centre would be opened on the afternoon of 1st July, following the presentation of awards to Equestrian students in the morning. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

b) Learning Resources Centre extension (papers J and K)

The Capital Support Application was discussed. The total project cost was about £1.5 million, including fitting out. It would be presented to the local LSC Capital Committee on 16th May. Following discussion, *the decision of F&GP to approve the application was ratified*.

Contractors were normally asked to tender for the shortest possible period and, at 41 weeks, this would require a start in November 2008 for completion at the beginning of September 2009. However, there would be advantages to starting the development earlier, and Deejak Builders Ltd had agreed to a 60 week programme without extra cost. They had been one of the lowest 2 tenderers and, due to their good record with previous projects, it was proposed to award them this contract as the site would potentially be quite difficult to manage with disruption to the education process. Following discussion, *the contract was awarded to Deejak*

Builders Ltd in the sum of £887,296.75.

c) Hockey Pitch (papers L and M)

The Capital Support Application was discussed. It would be presented to the local LSC Capital Committee on 16th May. It was hoped to obtain planning permission in the next 2 weeks. Following discussion, *the decision of F&GP to approve the application was ratified.*

Five tenders had been received, the lowest being from Bernhard's Sports Surfaces Ltd at £504,403.40 excluding fees and VAT. This did not include a sum for recovering the water required for this type of pitch, and this would cost about £17,000. GSS recommended that a client retained contingency of £55,000 also be approved. However, it was unlikely that the full contingency sum would be required and the sum for water recovery should be accommodated within this contingency. Once the pitch has been constructed, the college will receive approval as an Olympic training venue for hockey. The England hockey squad had also expressed an interest in using the centre for training. Following discussion, *the contract was awarded to Bernhard's Sports Surfaces Ltd at a final value to be agreed within the total allocated budget of £559,403.40*

08/14 Abington Park Veterinary Practice (agenda item 14)

The initial 5 year lease was about to be completed. The partnership had worked well for both parties. The veterinary practice was now looking for a longer lease and it had been decided to offer them a period of 25 years. It was hoped to sign the new lease next month. The practice also wished to build a veterinary referral hospital on the site. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/15 Capital Development Programme (agenda item 15, papers N and O)

It had been decided to appoint project consultants using the LSC framework but this had been subject to long delays. Three competitive tenders had been 'points scored' and the consultancies interviewed by 3 senior managers and 3 governors. It was proposed to appoint GSS Architecture as architects and Davis Langdon as project managers and quantity surveyors. Details of the framework were still awaited so interim letters of appointment would be issued for the time being. There was no financial risk associated with this. Following discussion, *it was agreed to award the contracts to GSS Architecture and Davis Langdon.*

Part of the programme was to develop a small business park for the development of added value food products. A feasibility study was required and NEL had agreed to fund 50% of the cost. An application had been submitted to the LSC for the other 50%. Three tenders had been received and, following discussion, *it was agreed to award the contract for stages i) and ii) of the feasibility study to the Food and Drink Forum in the sum of £29,750 excluding VAT, and stage iii) - to be carried out on their behalf by Cox Freeman Architects - in the sum of £9,400 excluding VAT subject to satisfactory completion of stages i) and ii)..*

08/16 Long term college development in the context of the South Midlands expansion (agenda item 16)

It was important to secure improved road access to the College to support the next

phase of development and alleviate future traffic problems. Discussions on collaborative working had been taking place with Tenscentral to obtain planning permission on some land and provide access from the A43. Tenscentral wished to move towards signing a promotional agreement within the next 6 to 9 months. The University of Northampton wished to jointly promote the university arc concept but would not commit any funds at present. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/17 ILT Strategy (agenda item 17, paper Pi)

This document was reviewed annually and all staff had been provided with an opportunity to contribute to its development. ILT was now playing an increasingly important part in the delivery of the curriculum the document emphasised this. Following discussion, *the ILT strategy was approved.*

Gerald Davies left the meeting.

08/18 ILR Date 2007-8 (agenda item 18, paper P)

Funding targets had been achieved and it was also hoped to achieve the target for adult learners by July. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/19 Indicative 16-18 LSC funding allocation, student numbers and standard learner numbers (agenda item 19, paper Q)

The allocation for 16-18 students had increased by 18.1% in cash terms but only by 1.7% per full-time equivalent. This appeared to be a good settlement compared to the rest of the sector and it had been helped by the success rates achieved by the College. The learner responsive element of the adult funding may not be known for a few weeks. The employer responsive element would not be available for at least a month. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/20 Recruitment 2008-9 (agenda item 20, paper R)

There had been 1,576 applications to date for 1,414 first year places. Acceptances were also high. Some 65% of the directly funded HE places had been filled with 2 years still to recruit. This may cause problems as the College could be penalised for over recruitment of HE students. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/21 Quarterly Budget Update (agenda item 21, paper S)

This was the second quarterly update. The changes were outlined and discussed. Following discussion, *the decision of F&GP to approve the changes was ratified.*

08/22 Management Accounts for March 2008 (agenda item 22, paper T)

The accounts were discussed. The surplus was £344,455 compared to a budget of £256,875. The College was in financial category B and rated Good under the Framework for Excellence and expected to be in category A at the end of the financial year. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/23 Minor Capital Works Proposals (agenda item 23, paper U)

The priorities for 2008-9 were presented. Orders and contracts would now be placed so the work could be carried out over the summer. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/24 Capital Equipment Proposals (agenda item 24, paper V)

The priorities for 2008-9 were presented. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/25 Local Government Pension Scheme (agenda item 25, paper W)

Changes to the scheme were outlined and discussed. Following discussion, *it was agreed to fix the salary for each member for LGPS purposes at 1st April each year and only alter it if a change of job took place, to continue not to offer additional discretionary benefits and to appoint the Director of Finance to hear stage 1 appeals under the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure.*

08/26 Strategic Plan 2008-12 (agenda item 26, paper X)

This plan formed the basis for the capital developments and applications for capital support to the LSC. Section 7 contained the student number targets and these may need to be re-visited in the light of funding negotiations. Following discussion, *the strategic plan was approved.*

08/27 Audit Committee Update (agenda item 27)

The Committee had met on 21st April and received 2 internal audit reports. The first one had not contained any recommendations. The second contained some recommendations concerning external lettings and stock control procedures at the Garden Centre. The latest risk management report had been received. The annual review of performance of the Funding Auditors had also been discussed and deemed satisfactory. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/28 Review of Profile of Activities (agenda item 28, paper Y)

This was the annual review of activities carried out by the College to ensure they were permissible under the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act and the Instrument and Articles of Government. It had been concluded that none of the activities were ultra vires. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/29 Thomas Harrison Trust (agenda item 29, papers Z and Zi)

The 6 monthly investment report was discussed. Following the purchase of the additional land, the balance on 13th March 2008 was £210,075. The investment had not performed well recently. Alternative investments were discussed and *it was agreed that a high interest bank or building society account or bond was the preferred choice. The managing trustees were delegated to consider the matter further at their next meeting.*

Jamie Mair left the meeting.

08/30 Policy Approvals and Updates (agenda item 30)

a) Health and Safety Policy (paper AB)

Changes to the policy mainly concerned inspection arrangements. Following discussion, *the changes were approved.*

b) Assessment Policy (paper AC)

Changes to the policy were outlined *and approved.*

c) Quality Policy (paper AD)

Changes to the policy were outlined *and approved.*

d) Policy for Students with Special Learning Difficulties (paper AE)

Changes to the policy were outlined *and approved.*

e) Staff Appointment Procedures (paper AF)

This drew together some existing documents and complied with the revised Instrument and Articles of Government. Following discussion, *the procedures were approved.*

08/31 Management Structure (agenda item 31, paper AG)

The Development Manager had left the College so her responsibilities had been temporarily re-assigned to other managers until a replacement could be appointed. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/32 Appointment of Deputy Principal (agenda item 32)

The appointment procedure had been carried out in March in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government. The selection committee recommended the appointment of Robin Chapman as Deputy Principal with effect from 1st September 2008. *This proposal was approved and members sent their congratulations to Robin Chapman and wished him success in his new post.*

08/33 Link Governors (agenda item 33)

The attachments had changed from subject areas to faculties. Schools work and HE had also been added as responsibilities. Following discussion, *the revised appointments were noted.*

08/34 Presentation Day (agenda item 34)

There would be 5 events this year between 30th June and 4th July. The 4 speakers confirmed to date were Peter Elwood, the High Sheriff; Howard Petch, a former landbased college principal and executive director of Landex; Ian Vincent of Daventry District Council and Phil Hollobone, the MP for Kettering. This year it was proposed to introduce the speaker before the presentations, and for the Governor proposing the vote of thanks to also thank those who made the day successful and to wind up the proceedings. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/35 Date of next meeting (agenda item 35)

Wednesday 30th July 2008 at 2.00pm in room M6. This would be preceded by the annual College and Estate tour at 10.30am and lunch at 1.00pm.

08/36 Any other business (agenda item 41)

There was no other business.

Part 1 of the meeting concluded. Staff and Student Governors left the meeting.