

## MOULTON COLLEGE FEC

### FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

#### **Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting Held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

##### Part 1

**Present:** Mr C Alderson-Smith (in the Chair), M C Barney, Mrs C Boardman,  
Mr J Gaggini, Mr P Heygate, Mr C Moody, Mr R Thompson

**In Attendance:** Mr R Chapman, Mr G Davies. Mr J Mair, Mr M Wilkinson

##### **09/41 Apologies for absence (agenda item 1)**

No apologies were received.

##### **09/42 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.

##### **09/43 Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009 (agenda item 3, paper A)**

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record.

##### **09/44 Matters Arising (agenda item 4)**

###### **a) Governor Development Day (minute 09/38)**

The event had been a great success. Both colleges visited wished to make reciprocal visits to Moulton. Further discussion on the visits was required. It was proposed to produce some questions to circulate to Governors to stimulate comment. The comments could then be discussed at a later date.

###### **b) University of Northampton (minute 09/40/a)**

Five Governors had met 5 members of the University's Senate on 16<sup>th</sup> March. Small group discussions had been held on areas of possible mutual benefit. A summary would be circulated.

##### **09/45 New Developments – Progress Report (agenda item 5)**

###### **a) LRC Extension (paper B)**

The financial report was discussed. The project was on schedule apart from the external landscaping although this was now progressing well. Members of the Resources Committee had visited the site recently and were pleased with the facility. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

## 09/46 Capital Development Programme (agenda item 6)

### a) Planning Applications

Verbal planning approval had been given for the staff houses and link road and the letter of confirmation was awaited. This would help the progress of the main application, particularly as the Highways Agency objection had been withdrawn. The Parish Council were actively opposing the application. The new planning application was likely to go to committee at the end of April. A letter would be sent to members explaining the potential benefits of the project. The documents for the appeal against rejection of the original application would not be submitted until the outcome of new application was known. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

### b) LSC Capital Support Application

The current situation was outlined and discussed. The College's continued growth may help to support its application. However, the LSC was having problems funding the projects already approved. There was now an embargo on any projects which exceeded the limits set out in the Financial Memorandum (expenditure not exceeding 5% of turnover and borrowing no more than 40% of turnover). Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

### c) Student Social Centre

The project could be progressed if the professional fees could be kept within the cap on borrowing. About £500,000 was required to get to the contract stage. It had been proposed to fund this using the VAT refund. However, following an appeal court decision, Revenue and Customs had stopped all payments under the Lennarts Scheme and, as consequence, the refund of VAT was now likely to be considerably less than expected at around £300,000. However a further £165,000 could now be received from a claim on the Equine Therapy Building, and interest on these sums would also be claimable in due course. It was proposed to hold the project in abeyance until further information was received. Following discussion, *this course of action was approved*.

### d) Sports Therapy Centre

The professional fees could be covered by the application to NEL for grant aid if successful. It was proposed to hold the project in abeyance until the outcome of this application was known. Following discussion, *this course of action was approved*.

## 09/47 Vocational Skills Academies (agenda item 7, paper E)

The proposed developments at East Northants would cost about £418,000 including fees and VAT. The Duchy wished to fund the development but their expected rate of return was too high at present. Following discussion, *the development was approved*.

Mr Heygate declared an interest in the part of this item concerning the South Northants Academy and took no part in the discussion. In addition to extra teaching accommodation, the central facilities at South Northants needed significant expansion. The landlord wished to erect a new building. The College's estimated cost of refurbishing the existing accommodation and

fitting out the new building was £147,631 including VAT. Following discussion, *capital expenditure of up to £150,000 and entry into a rental agreement at a realistic rate for the new building were approved*

The financial options associated with moving the Daventry Academy to Badby Road were discussed. Following discussion, *it was agreed that hiring temporary classrooms was the preferred option.*

Gerald Davies left the meeting.

**09/48 Unity School/Academy (agenda item 8)**

The NCC cabinet was due to decide whether to close Unity College in April and this would determine whether the project would go ahead. The new name would be the Bishop Leeson Academy. A decision on whether to operate an extended day would be made soon. Advertisements had been placed for a Senior Vice-Principal, and a Vice Principal's (Business Development) post would be advertised shortly. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**09/49 Management Accounts for February 2009 (agenda item 9, paper F)**

The accounts were discussed. The surplus to date was £224,472 over the budget. Borrowings were currently 27.6% of turnover. The College was in financial category B and rated Good under the Framework for Excellence. Following discussion, *the accounts were approved.*

**09/50 Student Association/Student Social Club Quarterly Accounts (agenda item 10, paper G)**

The accounts were discussed. Levels of trading were as expected. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**09/51 Minor Capital Works proposals (agenda item 11, paper H)**

The proposed list of priorities for 2009-10 was discussed. The number of projects funded would depend on the outcome of the budgeting process. Following discussion, *the priorities were approved.*

**08/19 Capital Equipment Proposals (agenda item 12, paper I)**

The proposed list of priorities for 2009-10 was discussed *and approved.*

**09/52 Tuition Fees 2009-10 (agenda item 13, paper J)**

The tuition fee for full-time, adult students for 2009-10 was £1,050. It was proposed to remit this fee. This would bring the College into line with other local colleges and encourage newly unemployed people to take up places. Following discussion, *the proposal to remit the fee was approved.*

**09/53 ILR Update 2008-9 (agenda item 14, paper K)**

The ILR update was not available and would be circulated later. The report on

employer responsive activity and apprenticeships was discussed. Both of these were on target. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**09/54 Recruitment 2009-10 (agenda item 15, paper L)**

General Education applications were being affected by the decision to start 6<sup>th</sup> forms in all the special schools in the county. Overall acceptances were well up on last year. HE applications were also considerably higher, although the Foundation Degree in Veterinary Nursing would not run as its validation had not been approved for a 2009 start. Some additional funding for part-time HE students in Construction had been obtained from CULN (Colleges and University of Leicester Network). Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**09/55 Moulton Apprentices School (agenda item 16, paper Li)**

It was proposed to recruit up to 12 high quality apprentices per year to work in various areas across the College. The apprentices could be with the College for up to 4 years if they progressed to Advanced Apprenticeships. A co-ordinator would be appointed to manage the school. Following discussion, *the development was endorsed*.

**09/56 Agreement with Moulton Parish Church (agenda item 17, paper M)**

The proposal to extend the agreement for a further 3 years was discussed. It had brought significant benefits to the College. Following discussion, *it was agreed to continue the agreement*.

**09/57 Student Sabbatical Officer (agenda item 18, paper N)**

The proposal to create the post of Student Sabbatical Officer to liaise with students across all the College sites was discussed. The appointment would initially be made by the College, but it was hoped eventually to move to an elected post. It was proposed that the appointee would be the second Student Governor in addition to the Chair of the Student Association. Following discussion, *the establishment of the post was approved*.

**09/58 Moulton College Alumni Association (agenda item 19, paper O)**

The proposal to establish an Association was outlined and discussed. It would be administered by a member of staff on a 0.5 contract. Membership would be free to former students. Following discussion, *the establishment of the Association was approved*.

**09/59 Study Tours (agenda item 20)**

**a) Request (paper P)**

A request for a trip to Poland by Landbased HE students *was approved*.

**b) Report (paper Q)**

The report of a trip to Paris by Agriculture students *was noted*.

**09/60 Review of Governance (agenda item 21, paper R)**

Options for the management of information available to Governors were discussed. It was hoped to reduce the amount of papers circulated. Security of documents would be an important consideration. Following discussion, *it was agreed that a trial by F&GP using laptops, with documents circulated on CD/memory stick would be considered, and the matter would be discussed again at a future meeting.*

**09/61 Date of next meeting (agenda item 22)**

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 at 9.30am in the Principal's Office.

**09/62 Any other business (agenda item 23)**

There was no other business.

Part 1 of the meeting concluded. Jamie Mair left the meeting.