

CENTRAL SUSSEX CORPORATION

Minutes of a Corporation Meeting held at 5.00 p.m. on Monday, 14th July, 2008 in T11 Crawley Campus

Membership: Clive Behagg*, Patrick Berry*, Martin Delbridge (Vice-Chair), Mark Froud, Paul Harding, Tony Hyams-Parish, Gill Marshman*, Sylvia Meli*, Andreia Moniz, Alan Morris, John Peel (Chair)*, Mark Read*, Zoë Richardson, Ramesh Shingadia, Russell Strutt* and Charlotte Wright.

* = present

Also in attendance: Suri Araniyasundaran, Sue Dare, Adrian Dodwell, Maureen Kilminster and Nick Whitley (Clerk)

The meeting became quorate at 17.04.

The Chair advised that he would move Item 13, the Report of the Task and Finish Group (Masterplan) to immediately before the Principal's Report.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received from Martin Delbridge, Mark Froud, Paul Harding, Tony Hyams-Parish, Andreia Moniz, Alan Morris, Zoë Richardson, Ramesh Shingadia and Charlotte Wright.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. Clive Behagg declared an interest because Chichester University was currently in negotiations with the College to establish Partnership arrangements for the College to run Chichester University Foundation Degrees.

STUDENT MEMBER APPOINTMENT

3. The meeting noted that Charlotte Wright would stop being a student of the College once term had ended and would therefore cease to be eligible to be a Student Member at that time. Adam Passingham had been nominated by the Student Association at Haywards Heath campus to be her successor.
4. **It was agreed to appoint Adam Passingham to be a Student Member of the Corporation for a period of up to four years, with effect from the 1st September.**

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF 19th MAY 2008

5. **The Minutes were signed as a correct record.**

MATTERS ARISING

6. **New Diplomas/15:** Adrian Dodwell advised that preparations for the new diplomas were continuing; however the Diploma in Society, Health & Development was being led by Collyers and was therefore not under the College's control.
7. **Stress Survey/28:** The Principal advised the meeting that the Steering Group had decided that it would not be appropriate to share the findings of the Stress Survey with students.
8. **Job Evaluation Pilot/30:** The Principal advised that the pilot had now been completed; about 90 jobs had been evaluated and moderated. It was planned to complete the full exercise by the end of October. It was noted that it had been planned to complete the full scheme by the end of September, not June as was stated in the previous Minutes.
9. **OFSTED Inspection/32:** The Principal confirmed that the College was expecting to be notified of an inspection: there would be a three-week notice period. The last full inspection of Crawley College took place four years ago this coming November, so there was a high probability that it would be just before or just after half-term this Autumn.
10. **Changes in the funding regime/49:** The Chair advised the meeting that the next meeting of the Chairs of the Sussex Colleges was not due to take place until November, when he would raise the issue.
11. **Adult Applications/51:** The Principal advised the meeting that there had been a subsequent increase in adult applications; these were now more in line with previous years. There was a measure of uncertainty for the future, however, because of the downturn in the economy.
12. **Water ingress at Haywards Heath/58:** It was confirmed that remedial works had been carried out; the building would need to dry out over the summer. It was likely to take up to a year for the building to dry out completely; however it would be usable in the meantime.

CHAIRMAN'S ACTION

13. The Chair advised that he had sent letters of thanks on behalf of the Corporation to Michael Coughlin and Charlotte Wright. He had also approved the College's response to the Machinery of Government consultation in accordance with the review by the recently convened Task and Finish Group. The College's views had been essentially in line with those submitted by both Plumpton College and the Association of Colleges (AOC).
14. He advised the meeting that he would also be writing to Derrick Johnson, to thank him for his many years supporting both the old Crawley College and Central Sussex College, now that he had resigned from the Resources Committee.

The Chairman's Actions were noted.

INTERIM HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

15. The Principal introduced the report, drawing attention to the Executive Summary. He pointed out that the number of accidents appeared to have levelled out; the Health and Safety Committee had considered the accident record, but had concluded that there were no common themes. Although the number of accidents reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) appeared high, this was in the context that the College sent the injured to the Accident & Emergency Department of the hospital whenever there was any doubt about further tests or treatment; all such referrals were reportable.
16. The focus groups following up from the Stress Survey had now been undertaken and the feedback had been incorporated into the Risk Assessment and Action Plan.
17. The Principal drew attention to Walkround Inspections. All areas were now covered and the majority of the relevant staff had been trained; however, he had concerns about the frequency with which they were carried out. This would be a focus for the coming year. He confirmed that this duty had been incorporated into the job descriptions of relevant staff.
18. The Chair drew particular attention to the accidents numbered 2 and 13 in the Appendix and stressed the need to continue maintaining the College buildings properly during the transition period, while new buildings were being planned and constructed.
19. **The report was received.**

REPORT OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP (MASTERPLAN)

20. The Clerk laid round copies of the report.
21. It was noted that the circulated report was to be held Commercial in Confidence.

MINUTES 22 – 37 ARE HELD CONFIDENTIAL TO PROTECT THE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS OF THE COLLEGE

38. **It was agreed to delegate authority to the Principal and Chair of Corporation jointly to vary the bid to the LSC for capital support, based on affordability and subject to a revised, satisfactory 10 Year Financial Plan having been approved by the Chair of Corporation, together with the Chair of Resources and the Chair of the Task & Finish Group (Masterplan).**

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

39. The Principal took the Corporation through his Power Point presentation (circulated before the meeting).
40. The College's direction remained the same as it had been at the time of the merger; it was planned to continue with the same direction over the coming five years.

41. Generally, the College had improved the success rates of its learners and had outstripped the expectations and targets set at the time of the merger. This was in part due to the fact that the College had not experienced the anticipated dip in performance that follows most mergers.
42. Eight priorities had been set for the next five years: four were customer focussed and four were organisational. These were expanded upon in the Power Point slides.
43. Special thanks were due to Chichester University which was partnering the College, to enable it to offer two Foundation Degrees from September 2009, in advance of any University Centre being established in Crawley. As far as the latter was concerned, a feasibility study had been completed, but not yet published; once it was available it would be presented to the Corporation. Brighton University were the agreed lead for the development of the Centre, with several lead partners including the University of Chichester. Employers were being approached to gain their support and their views as to the local priorities for Higher Education.

44. The Clerk circulated copies of a final slide, which identified the key events for 2008/09, including the expected inspection masterplanning and re-accreditation for Investors in People. The Principal drew attention to the way he and the Executive were addressing the "Management Stretch", identifying which Member of the College Leadership Team was leading on each of the main events and how they were being supported. He reassured the Corporation that he and the Executive team would keep this under review to ensure that they were received adequate support.
45. It was noted that, although the Corporation was aware that the Principal and the Executive were constantly scanning the continually changing external environment, this was neither articulated nor acknowledged within the presentation.
46. The Principal advised the meeting that he had recently attended a presentation on the way Universities used e-learning; the College would need to achieve a step change in its approach. He confirmed that the developments needed to be both internal and external and this would require investment in equipment, software and developing staff expertise. The Teaching and Learning Managers were charged with working with the College's e-learning specialist to spread existing good practice across the College as a whole. New materials were also being made available nationally to support the development of the new diplomas.
47. It was noted that one of the targets that the Executive was setting itself was to make the College a great place to work; this was felt to be very challenging, but commendable. The Staff Members commented that, while some staff were still negative, there was a noticeable improvement in the morale of the majority.
- 48. The report was received.**

REPORT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

49. The Clerk introduced the report.
50. It was noted that the Committee had considered and rejected a request from the Resources Committee that the College's suite of employment policies be reviewed, and suggested that the HR Director should be given that task.
51. The Clerk drew particular attention to the Committee's view of the College's handling of complaints; generally, the Committee had been impressed by the reduction in complaints and by the way issues over the building programme at Haywards Heath had been handled. There was, however, still a need to improve the timelines of responses.
52. The Risk Assurance Group had reported its findings to the Audit Committee; the Committee had been pleased to note that the Key Risk Register appeared to have correctly identified the key strategic risks. The Risk Management Policy had also been reviewed; it was concluded that it did not require any revision and that it should no longer be reviewed annually. The next review date should be in three years' time.

53. The proposed Audit Programme had been considered and was now before the Corporation for approval. The Committee had also asked the Internal Auditors to prepare proposals for reviewing the College's governance arrangements for monitoring the capital programme, to ensure they were appropriate and followed best practice.
54. **The report was received.**
55. **The Audit programme for 2008/09 was approved.**
56. **The Committee's decision to revise the Financial Regulations was noted.**
57. **The Risk Management Policy was confirmed and it was agreed that it need not be reviewed before July 2011.**
58. **The Key Risks on the Key Risk Register were noted.**

REPORT OF THE CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

59. Sue Dare introduced the report. She drew attention to the recent Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER). The Clerk confirmed that he would circulate a copy of the report to Corporation Members when it was published.
60. Sue Dare drew attention to the Framework for Excellence; **it was agreed that a fuller report should be presented to a future Corporation meeting.** The College was reasonably well placed to respond to the new standard; the LSC would use the Framework's measures from next year when making judgements about the College. The LSC was still developing the standard, particularly with respect to measuring learner responsiveness, tracking learner destinations and employer responsiveness.
61. Attention was then drawn to the Charter, which needed formal approval by the Corporation. It was noted that some minor corrections that had been made at the Committee meeting had not been incorporated into the version circulated to Corporation. It was also noted that the reference to plagiarism needed to refer to a policy rather than to the law.
62. **The report was received.**
63. The Corporation adopted the College Charter for 2008/09, subject to the minor amendments being incorporated into the final document.
64. **It was agreed that the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee and the Resources Committee continue to monitor the relevant key performance measures that inform the Framework for Excellence and that the Corporation consider, at a future meeting, how best to monitor the overall "balanced score card" on a regular basis.**

REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

65. Patrick Berry introduced the report. He drew attention to the progress the College had made in reporting and monitoring Human Resources issues,

which he considered now to be “outstanding”. There were still some elements to be added-in as part of the drive for continuous improvement. Equality & Diversity monitoring was now becoming well established.

66. He drew attention to revisions to employment policies being negotiated with the Trades Unions. A significant change was that, in most cases, the Principal would be delegating the authority to dismiss staff to other Senior Postholders, and would hear any appeals himself. Protocols were being developed to ensure that the Senior Postholder exercising the authority to dismiss would not have been involved in the matter at an earlier stage and that the Principal would not hear any appeals if he had been involved in the decision to dismiss. Should it become necessary for the Principal to dismiss a member of staff personally, it would be necessary to convene a Special Panel of Corporation Members to hear any appeal, as at present.
67. It was noted that the proposed budget included provision for a pay award for staff of 2% from the 1st August, 2008 to be followed by a further rise of 1% from February 2009. The Committee were recommending that the Principal be asked to discuss any proposals for a higher pay award with the Corporation before making any decision, in view of the fact that no headroom has been built into the budget.
68. **The report was received.**
69. **It was agreed that, should the AoC recommend a pay rise that would cost more than the amount in the budget, the Principal be asked to report to the Corporation before making any decision on the recommendation.** Mark Read and Gill Marshman did not vote on this resolution on the grounds that it concerned their pay and conditions as members of staff.
70. **The franchise programme with the Brighton Institute of Modern Music (BIMM), was approved and authority was given to the College Secretary to sign the Agreement when negotiations had been concluded.**
71. **The College’s Disability Statement for 2008 was approved.**

BUDGET AND THREE YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST

72. Patrick Berry asked Suri Araniyasundaran to address any points that required clarifying. The latter explained that the LSC guidance on the preparation of the Three Year Financial Forecast required capital projects to be excluded from the forecast until the relevant Application in Principle (AiP) had been approved.
73. The Clerk then laid round a revised Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the years 2008/10, showing the impact of Haywards Heath Phase 3 as an example.
74. Suri Araniyasundaran took the meeting through the amendments.
75. Suri Araniyasundaran advised that the College was still awaiting confirmation from the LSC for approximately £3M of funding allocation. The Executive would be looking for further efficiency gains and additional sources of income

over the summer, and would report again to the Special Corporation meeting in September.

76. It was noted that, although there may be the possibility of some improvement in income, there was also a real possibility that the financial position may worsen when the LSC confirmed the funding. The coming year was forecast to be very tight and there was a need to review the position in September, as indicated.
77. **It was agreed to approve the budget for 2008/09 and the associated three-year financial forecast as originally presented.**
78. **It was agreed to delegate authority to the Chair of Corporation in conjunction with the Chair of Resources and the Chair of the Task and Finish Group (Masterplan) to adjust the third year of the financial forecast to reflect the impact of Haywards Heath Phase 3 if it proved necessary) in accordance with LSC guidance.**

REPORT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY BOARDS

79. The Principal introduced the report. He advised the meeting that both Community Boards had reviewed their role. The Crawley, Horsham & East Grinstead LCB had concluded that it was not able to meet its full terms of reference, having not managed to get adequate school and employer representation on the Board. It was, therefore, only able to fulfil the community dimension of its remit. This latter had proved a strength; however, schools were working through a Partnership Board, and employers had a number of other routes for engaging with the College. The LCB were recommending that the Board be disestablished.
80. By contrast, the Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath LCB had considered it was carrying out a full and effective role in relation to the College's provision for 14-19 year old learners. Its membership brought a wide range of perspectives and was representative of the key interests.
81. The Corporation expressed its thanks to Paul Harding, who had tried extremely hard to widen the range of representative voices on the Crawley Horsham & East Grinstead LCB.
82. The reports were received.
83. **It was agreed to accept the recommendation of the Crawley, Horsham & East Grinstead Local Community Board that it be disestablished.**
84. The Corporation expressed its thanks to all the Members of the LCBs.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

85. The Chair advised the meeting that he had attended an induction session for three of the new Corporation Members, arranged by the Clerk.
86. He had also led a Task & Finish Group to prepare the College's response to the Machinery of Government Green Paper, as well as attending a number of Corporation Committee meetings.

87. Externally, he had represented the College at West Dean College for a presentation by Sir Nicholas Stern on "Adapting to Change".
88. He had also attended a CADIA lunch-time meeting at which the Principal and Julian Crampton (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Brighton) had given a presentation about the proposed University Centre for Crawley. The businessmen in the audience had demonstrated real interest in the idea and had proved very responsive.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

89. The Clerk advised that he would be proposing to the next ordinary meeting of the Corporation that he and the Principal sign the Skills Pledge on behalf of the College.
90. The Clerk circulated copies of the Corporation Calendar for 2008/09 which was noted.

The meeting closed at 19.28.