

CENTRAL SUSSEX CORPORATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Central Sussex Corporation held at 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, 16th June 2005 at Haywards Heath College

Membership: Mr. M. Allen*, Mr. P. Berry*, Mr. M. Delbridge*, Mr. M. Froud*,
Mr. P.A. Harding* and Mr. J.A. Peel (Chair)*

Also in Attendance: Dr. R. Strutt, Mr. S. Araniyasundaran, Mr A Dodwell, Mr. N.K. Whitley (Clerk)
and for part of the meeting, Mr S Hutchinson (KPMG)

* = present

APOLOGIES

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Delbridge and for lateness from Mr Harding.
2. As the meeting was not quorate at 17.30, but it was known that Mr Harding would be arriving shortly, the Chair determined that those present could discuss items that were for information only pending the formal opening of the meeting.

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL (LSC) LETTER ABOUT FUNDING FOR 2005/2006 AND 2006/2007

3. Dr Strutt gave a brief introduction to the letter, which had been previously circulated. He confirmed that Central Sussex College had received an increase of 5% over the total funding received by the two Colleges in 2004/2005. This formed part of a general shift of funding from the North to the South-East. He also confirmed that the LSC had maintained the same level of funding for Adult and Community Learning as in 2004/2005 (namely £98,045) without any inflationary increase.
4. He stressed the significance of the increase in funding for the National Employer Training Programme; essentially this represented a transfer of funding. Only those Colleges with Action for Business accreditation would be successful in bidding for this funding stream.
5. Both Colleges' past practice in addressing "cost of living" pay awards was briefly discussed. Haywards Heath College would normally follow the national recommendation for Sixth Form Colleges; if no agreement had been reached on the figure by the beginning of the financial year, a provisional award would be made as close to the anticipated final level as could be judged and a supplementary award of the difference would follow. Crawley College would aim to meet the national recommendation of the Association of Colleges; a decision would be made at the time the budget was approved as to how much could be included and it was for the Executive to determine any supplementary adjustment.

Mr Harding joined the meeting at 17.42. The Corporation now being quorate, the Chairman opened formal proceedings.

All present congratulated the Chair on his being awarded the Order of Officer of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

6. Mr Peel and Mr Froud declared that they both had interests to declare in respect of Item 13, LearnDirect, Mr Froud as Chief Executive of Sussex Enterprise (the Hub that had the responsibility for contracting with training providers for LearnDirect) and Mr Peel as a Member of the Board of Sussex Enterprise.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE 23RD MAY 2005

7. The minutes were signed as a correct record.
8. It was confirmed that no portion of the minutes now needed to be held confidential and all related papers should be made available by the Clerk on request, with the exception of those including personal information about the individuals involved in the application of the TUPE process and appointment to posts in Central Sussex College.

MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA

9. **Policy on confidential business/7:** The Clerk confirmed that he would be presenting a paper to the next meeting.
10. **Three Year Development Plan/10:** The letter dated 23rd May from the Director of Operations of the LSC to Dr Strutt was noted. The response had been based on the draft plan submitted to the LSC as a working document, and the priority issues identified in Annexe B to the response had already been addressed in the final version approved at the last meeting.
11. **Membership of the Corporation/11:** The Chair advised that he had taken some soundings, but that he needed to have further discussions before he would be in a position to advise on whether the role of Local Authority Members (other than a West Sussex County Council (WSCC) nominee) would be best located in Local Community Boards (LCB).
12. **Re-branding Exercise/41:** Dr Strutt advised that the re-branding programme was broadly on schedule. There was some concern, particularly at Crawley, about possible delays in replacing the external signs, because of the lead-time to obtain planning consent; it was agreed that the Chief Executive of Crawley Borough Council be approached to see what could be done to minimise delay.

APPOINTMENT OF INSURERS

13. The Clerk introduced the report. He advised the meeting that WSCC insurance officers had assisted in drawing up the tender specification and had reviewed the tender response by Zurich Municipal. Although the WSCC officers were prohibited by current regulations from offering advice on insurance matters, they had confirmed that they had not identified any matters of concern.
14. It was agreed to authorise the Clerk to appoint Zurich Municipal as Central Sussex College's insurers in accordance with their response to the tender specification including in particular the annual premium schedule totalling £112,256.66 (plus Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) and terrorism insurance for a premium in the order of £7,500 (plus IPT).

APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDITORS

15. The Clerk introduced the paper. The meeting noted that the Chair of the Audit Committee would be chairing a panel to receive presentations from short-listed audit firms on the 23rd June.
16. It was concluded that the appointment of auditors could wait until the next meeting of the Corporation, when the recommendations of the Chair of the Audit Committee would be addressed.
17. The report was received.

APPOINTMENT OF BANKERS

18. Mr Araniyasundaran introduced the report.
19. **It was agreed to appoint Lloyds TSB as bankers for Central Sussex College for a period of five years, subject to annual review and re-appointment.**
20. It was noted that Crawley College had two secured loans and Haywards Heath College had one unsecured loan; one of the secured loans only was with Lloyds TSB. The Executive was asked to review the possibilities and desirability of consolidating the loans with Lloyds TSB.
21. The bank mandate was considered.
22. **The following resolutions were agreed:-**
 - A. That accounts be opened with Lloyds TSB Bank plc (the "Bank").
 - B. That the Bank mandate be completed in accordance with the wording appended to these minutes.
23. **The Chair and the Clerk were authorised to sign the bank mandate letter addressed to Lloyds TSB Bank plc.**
24. It was noted that it had been agreed to authorise any one signatory to sign cheques with a value below £2000, and any two signatories for sums over £2000. Concern was expressed that there should be an additional control in respect to the signatories for sums in excess of £2000, to guard against possible fraud. It was recognised that this should be considered further and in more detail in the Financial Regulations when they were presented to the Corporation for approval.

REPORT ON SET-UP PROJECTS

25. Dr Strutt introduced Mr Hutchinson, a consultant from KPMG, who laid round a progress report on the Set-Up Projects. Mr Hutchinson explained that his role was to facilitate the Groups working on the Set-Up Projects and to ensure that they worked in accordance with their briefs and met their deadlines. He had access to a larger pool of consultants with a variety of relevant expertise.
26. A particular priority was the preparation of a risk management plan for Central Sussex College; a draft would be presented with the budget papers to the Policy & Planning Committee meeting to be held on 4th July.
27. Mr Hutchinson summarised a report on the ILT Infrastructure; the specialist consultant was advising a cautious, risk based approach. **It was agreed that the Clerk should circulate a copy of this report by e-mail.**
28. It was noted that security was a risk for both main campuses; this was particularly pertinent for the library/learning resource centre provision.
29. There was a discussion about the role of the "attached governors" for the Set-Up Projects. It was recognised that their involvement should remain at a strategic, high level, unless there were serious concerns about lack of progress or business critical issues with one or other of the projects. However, there was a need to ensure the consultants (and Mrs Dare in her role as secondee) were aware of which governors were attached to which projects.
30. It was noted that any lessons to be learned should be communicated at an early stage.

31. Mr Hutchinson advised that he would be adopting a “traffic-light” approach in future when reporting progress; green indicating satisfactory progress to plan; amber to indicate emerging issues and red to highlight significant concern.

32. The report was received.

Mr Hutchinson left the meeting at 18.52.

PROGRESS REPORT ON LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

33. Dr Strutt gave a brief report on progress to date.

34. Mr Araniyasundaran was congratulated on his appointment as Executive Director Corporate Services; Dr Strutt advised the meeting that he had also appointed Mr Araniyasundaran to be his Deputy.

35. It was confirmed that there should be no discretionary enhancement in the case of a request for voluntary severance or early retirement, beyond the use of actual weekly pay to calculate any redundancy payment.

36. It was noted that the Principal-designate would present a full policy paper on this topic to a future meeting of the Corporation.

37. The report was received.

AUTHORITY TO APPLY SEAL

38. The Clerk was authorised to obtain a seal for Central Sussex College.

39. It was agreed that the Vice-Chair be given general authority to authenticate the application of the seal.

40. The Clerk was asked to establish whether, in the interests of practicality, the general authority to authenticate the application of the seal could be extended to other or all Corporation Members.

Mr Berry left the meeting at 19.10.

41. As the meeting was now inquorate, it was recognised that no formal business call be transacted; however the remaining items were all for information (apart from the Code of Conduct for Corporation Members, which could be deferred to the next meeting) and therefore discussion of these continued.

THE APPLICATION OF TUPE TO THE BODY OF STAFF OF BOTH COLLEGES

42. Dr Strutt explained some of the changes that he would be making to the letter. He confirmed that he would not be offering voluntary severance.

STRUCTURE OF LOCAL COMMUNITY BOARDS (LCB)

43. Dr Strutt gave a brief overview of the paper. He confirmed that, since preparing the proposals he had come to the conclusion that each LCB should have the same scope, and would cover both 14-19 and skills provision delivered in the particular locality.

44. It was confirmed that (as had been resolved by the Joint Corporation Working Party) each LCB would be chaired by a member of the Central Sussex Corporation.
45. It was confirmed that the schedule of business would be drawn up by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk in conjunction with the Principal and the LCB Chair.
46. It was recognised that the Matrix identifying the responsibilities of individual Corporation Members needed to be considered further by the Corporation.

REPORT ON LEARNDIRECT

47. Mr Froud left the meeting for this item, since as Chief Executive of Sussex Enterprise, he was involved in deciding which contracts would be awarding for LearnDirect. Mr Peel remained, since he was not involved in those decisions.
48. Dr Strutt gave a brief outline of the process that had been gone through in preparing the College's bid for a LearnDirect contract, and some of the specific differences in approach being taken.
49. Once a successful LearnDirect Centre had been established at Crawley, it was proposed to develop further centres.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

50. It was noted that there would be a presentation on the proposed Property Developments of the Haywards Heath campus at 4.00 pm on the 4th July, immediately prior to the policy Committee meeting, which would therefore also be held at Haywards Heath.
51. Mr Allen drew attention to the value of the Clerk to Haywards Heath Committee working with the Clerk to the Corporation and suggested that she be invited to attend the next meeting of the Corporation to be held at Haywards Heath. The Clerk agreed to arrange this.
52. The next meeting of the Corporation will be held on Thursday, 21st July, at 5.00 pm at Crawley College.