

CORPORATE BOARD

NORTH WEST KENT COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the CORPORATE BOARD

held at 5.30pm on Wednesday, 7 July 2010 at Oakfield Lane, Dartford

Present: Mr E Anderson (Chairman)
Dr R Finney
Ms E Birchenough
Mr J Parkes
Mrs S Adams
Mr D Gleed
Mr G Moody
Mr N Butterfield
Ms D Wroblewski
Mr R Higgins
Mr O Oguns
Mr A Parkinson

In attendance: Mr D Holland (Clerk to the Corporation)
Mr T Knight (Vice Principal)
Mr G Parrett (Director of Finance and Systems)
Mrs C Hopkins (minuting secretary)

P-1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs P Jones, Mr B Newell and Mr R Singh Gill.

Members welcomed Construction students, who had recently taken part in, and received awards in, SkillBuild and Skilled Up competitions, together with Derek Rutherford (Head of School, Construction) and Mark Baldwin (Lecturer, Brickwork, and Lead Co-ordinator of the competition). The Head of School explained that with Mark Baldwin, Jon Hopkins (Lecturer, Carpentry) and Phil Jubb (Lecturer, Painting and Decorating) have supported their students in the respective trade areas throughout the vocational programme and competitions.

The Head of School briefly outlined the background to the competition and stated that two years ago SEEDA and the LSC had made funds available in order that Kent colleges could engage in healthy competition between themselves under the name of "Skilled Up". From the local competitions, the best students were put forward to take part in the SkillBuild competition

Action

at a regional level. Next year the international competition will take place in London. Also during the year two suppliers, Dulux and Johnstone Paints, had run their own competitions and some students have engaged in them.

The students were presented with a certificate and voucher by the Chairman of the Corporation for their successes in:

Lauren Scott (Painting and Decorating)	1 st – in-house competition; 4 th – Dulux competition; 2 nd senior – SkillBuild in South-East region
Aron Baker [apprentice] (Painting and Decorating)	2 nd – in house competition; 1 st – Dulux South-East region apprentice of the year, (also attended the national final in Leeds recently); 1 st – Skilled Up (Best in Kent); Secured the trophy shield for Painting and Decorating for the College, second year running
Alex Prall [apprentice] (Painting and Decorating)	4 th – Dulux South-East region competition; 3 rd – Johnstone South-East region competition; 3 rd – SkillBuild South-East region
Kieran Tucker (Carpentry – Bench)	1 st – in-house competition last year; 2 nd – last year in SkillBuild (Joinery, regional); 1 st – this year in SkillBuild (Joinery, regional); 1 st – Best in Kent last year
Charlie Connor [apprentice] (Carpentry – Site)	2 nd – in-house competition; 1 st – SkillBuild regional (Carpentry); 1 st – Best in Kent, securing the trophy shield for Carpentry – Site for the College, second year running
David Fry (Bricklaying)	1 st – in-house competition; 3 rd – Best in Kent

Members believed that the competitions were an ideal opportunity to encourage aspiration amongst students and to encourage prospective students to take part in the future. Members congratulated the staff and students involved in these competitions.

P-2 MINUTES

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2010 were approved and signed as a correct record.

2.2 Matters Arising

(D-2) Governors' Review Group

The Chairman apologised for not having provided the informal notes

of meetings and the Group's comprehensive report, owing to family circumstances. He advised that such papers would be made available for the next Board meeting in October 2010.

Action

Chairman

2.3 The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 15 June 2010 were approved and signed as a correct record.

2.4 **Matters Arising**

None was raised.

P-3 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Members received and noted the Principal's Report (Paper No CB/07.07.10/D-1). He outlined the main items for members:

1. Funding and Planning for 2010/11

1.1 *Curriculum Planning Exercise*

1.2 *Fundable Courses and the Learning Aims Database*

The Principal explained that an external consultant from *FE Associates* had reviewed all the courses being planned for September with respect to their eligibility to operate. Some issues remained in a few areas and follow up action is being taken.

1.3 *Update on the 16-18 SLN Learner Ratio*

The Director of Finance and Systems had contacted a college in the Midlands, in a similar position, with a view to ascertaining whether any assistance can be given in increasing the learner ratio.

2. Government Announcements

2.1 *Announcements since 6 May*

Various announcements had been forthcoming since the new Administration had been formed including the amalgamation of funding for *Train to Gain*, *Apprentices* and *Learner Responsive Funding* into a single 'pot'. Others included: (1) there will be no further capital funding in the short to medium term outside of the £50m which has been prioritised for those most in need, (2) the likelihood that Train to Gain would disappear at the end of March 2011, (3) further introductions of new 14-19 Vocational Diplomas have been stopped, (4) the abolition of some education quangos, (5) speculation that an FEFC may reappear, and (6) the announcement of a 25% cut in public spending.

2.2 *KAFEC Representation*

The Kent Association of Further Education Colleges and the Association of South East Colleges (AOSEC) were planning a dinner in Parliament for MPs in Kent and the six college principals. The Principal believed this to be an opportunity to raise issues faced by the sector and the impact on colleges in Kent.

3. Accommodation Issues

3.1 *Official Opening*

The Principal was awaiting a reply from Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Education, regarding his availability to officiate at the opening in September. Any date in September had been offered.

3.3 *Gravesend*

It was noted that the Maritime Operations and Logistics team had moved into The Maltings.

3.4 *SusCon*

It was unfortunate that the £2m capital funding had not been forthcoming. As a result, the Principal had approached the Skills Funding Agency for a response. If a response was not received within two weeks, the Principal would take the matter to local MPs and the relevant Ministers.

4. Higher Education

4.1 *University of Greenwich*

The recent clarity around fees for full-time programmes charged by partner colleges was noted, ie the strong likelihood that partner colleges will have to mirror the University fee levels or risk being contractually disadvantaged. Also, it is likely that partner colleges in close proximity will have to streamline their offers to ensure viable group sizes across the partnership. Discussions are likely to take place in autumn with Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley, Bromley and Orpington Colleges.

4.2 *Academic Council*

The Director of Curriculum, Quality and Human Resources has been elected to serve on the Academic Council of the University of Greenwich, thereby enabling the profile of the College to be raised. The Chairman requested that the Board's congratulations be passed to the Director.

6. Staffing Issues

6.1 *Vice Principal Changes*

Following the recruitment process, Penny Morgan had been offered the role of Vice Principal. She had accepted the position and had been able to negotiate an earlier departure from her current employer. As a result, she will commence her service at the College on 1 September 2010.

7. Student Successes

7.1 *Arts Festival*

It was noted that Ms Wroblewski had attended the Arts Festival Week which highlighted the work of the College's Media and Creative Arts students, as well as that of Performing Arts. The week had been a success and had also been attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Dartford and the new MP for Dartford.

8. Changes to Curriculum Areas

8.1 *Schools*

8.2 *Structure Chart*

As a result of the impending retirements of a number of long-serving staff within the management tier, rationalisation of some schools had taken place. A new organisation chart was being prepared and would be submitted to the Board in October 2010.

9. Challenges and Opportunities for the next 12 months and beyond

9.1 *Apprentice Training*

The Director of Enterprise had compiled a useful briefing document (Appendix 3 to the Principal's Report) concerning the possibility of creating an Apprenticeship Training Agency. Legal advice had been sought from Eversheds, solicitors, and it appeared that the 'voluntary workers' scheme', under the aegis of which the College found work placements for the apprentices who were paid by employers, was the most appropriate vehicle.

10. Staff Communication

10.1 *Staff Briefings*

The Principal reported that, with the Vice Principal, staff briefings had taken place during the second half of June. Staff had been able to pose questions and it appeared that the briefings had been well received. Further briefings would take place in the Autumn term.

Action

Clerk

10.2 *Management Conference*

An 'away day' for the Senior and Middle Management Teams would be held on 12 July, in an attempt to establish consistency with procedural applications across College.

11. Strategic and Operational Planning

11.1 *Three Year Strategic Plan (incorporating Item R-9)*

11.2 *One Year Operational Plan (incorporating Item R-10)*

The Principal reminded members that it was usual at this meeting to consider the Three Year Strategic Plan and the One Year Operational Plan. However in light of the change in Government, he believed that further consideration of the documents was required. He proposed that the Three Year Strategic Plan be prepared over the Autumn, following the Governors' Away Day on 9 October, with a view to the completed document being available for discussion at the Annual Corporate Conference in March 2011. As far as the One Year Operational Plan was concerned, the Principal suggested that the document be prepared over the summer break, in readiness for the Board meeting in October 2010. Members agreed with the Principal's proposals.

12. Safeguarding

12.1 *Report from College Senior Designated Person*

Members noted that the College's Child Protection Officer's report forms Item R-8 on the agenda.

R-1 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

1.1 Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy

Members received and noted the Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-1.1). As proposed by Mr Moody and seconded by Mr Parkes, it was

RESOLVED to adopt the Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy, as detailed in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-1.1.

1.2 College Charter

Members received and noted the College Charter (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-1.2). As proposed by Mr Parkes and seconded by Mrs Adams, it was

RESOLVED to adopt the College Charter, as detailed in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-1.2.

Action

Principal

	Action
<p>1.3 Proposed Change of Name to Curriculum and Quality Committee</p> <p>The Chairman announced that this Item would be deferred until the next meeting, as further discussion was required at the Chairmen's Group.</p>	Clerk
<p>R-2 AUDIT COMMITTEE</p>	
<p>2.1 Risk Management Policy</p> <p>Members received and noted the Risk Management Policy (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-2.1). Members noted that apart from reformatting of the policy into house style, only one amendment had been made relating to “termly reporting”. Subject to a correction in paragraph 3.2 of the policy to refer to “... withdrawal from unacceptably risky activities”, members were satisfied with the amended policy. As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Mrs Adams, it was</p> <p>RESOLVED to adopt the Risk Management Policy, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-2.1, subject to the above amendment.</p>	
<p>2.2 Risk Register and Risk Reduction Plan</p> <p>Members received and noted the Risk Register and Risk Reduction Plan (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-2.2). As proposed by Ms Birchenough and seconded by Mr Moody, it was</p> <p>RESOLVED to accept the Risk Register and Risk Reduction Plan, as detailed in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-2.2.</p>	
<p>2.3 Anti-Fraud Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Members received and noted the Anti-Fraud Policy and Procedure (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-2.3). As proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Ms Birchenough, it was</p> <p>RESOLVED to adopt the Anti-Fraud Policy and Procedure, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-2.3.</p>	
<p>R-3 ESTATES COMMITTEE</p>	
<p>3.1 Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>Members received and noted the Health and Safety Policy (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-3.1), which had undergone significant amendment.</p> <p>Mrs Adams referred members to clause 4.1.2 (page 12 of the marked up version of the policy) which she believed should properly read “ensure</p>	

adequate resources in terms of funds, materials...”. Members agreed that the correction was necessary. Reference was also made to the inclusion of a new organisational chart. The Vice Principal advised that the organisational chart was correct as at today but a new version, from September, would supersede the current version.

Action

Vice
Principal

As proposed by Mr Moody and seconded by Ms Birchenough, it was

RESOLVED *to adopt the Health and Safety Policy, as detailed in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-3.1, subject to the above amendment.*

R-4 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

4.1 Redundancy Policy

Members received and noted the Redundancy Policy (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-4.1) which had been re-written to reflect current practice in the sector.

The Clerk advised that he had sought advice from Eversheds, solicitors, on the issues of a single appeal. He believed that if the Principal had been involved substantially during the process then an opportunity to appeal to Governors should be available, as had been provided in an earlier Grievance Procedure within the College.

As proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Oguns, it was

RESOLVED *to adopt the Redundancy Policy, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-4.1 subject to the inclusion of a clause in the appeal section which makes clear that, in exceptional circumstances, where the Principal has necessarily been involved in the process at an earlier stage and/or where the Principal's judgement as final arbiter might appear to have been compromised, the aggrieved staff member may apply in writing within ten days of the receipt of the decision to the Clerk to the Corporation, who will arrange for three governors to hear such appeal. The governors will hold a meeting to consider the complainant's appeal within a reasonable period of time of receipt and will send to all parties copies of a written decision within a reasonable period of time of the appeal. The decision of the governors shall be final.*

4.2 CRB and ISA Policy and Guidance

Members received and noted the CRB and ISA Policy and Guidance (Paper

No CB/07.07.10/R-4.2), a statutory policy which followed the model and guidance provided. Mr Parkes stressed the need for a policy statement. Members agreed that the Principal should revisit the document to consider the 'policy' section of the document. Members were satisfied that the policy should be adopted, but reviewed within the next year following publication of the Government's review of the recent guidance. As proposed by Ms Birchenough and seconded by Mr Moody, it was

RESOLVED *to adopt the CRB and ISA Policy and Guidance, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-4.2, subject to a review of the document within the next year, upon publication of the Government's review of the recent guidance.*

4.3 **Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure**

Members received and noted the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-4.3). Members noted that there were currently various policies relating to sickness and absence which had been incorporated into one policy, while being amended substantially to reflect good practice within the sector. As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Ms Birchenough, it was

RESOLVED *to adopt the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-4.3.*

5. **REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

5.1 **Terms of Reference**

Members received and noted the Terms of Reference of the Remuneration Committee (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-5.1). As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Ms Birchenough, it was

RESOLVED *to retain unchanged the Terms of Reference of the Remuneration Committee, as outlined in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-5.1.*

5.2 **Principal's Salary**

5.3 **Clerk to the Corporation's Salary**

5.4 **College Pay Award**

5.5 **Senior Postholders' Salaries**

Members received and noted the extracts from the minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 2 July 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-5.2). The Chairman explained that this was the first year that the Committee believed it necessary to take the stance of no salary or

College Pay Award increases to any staff, in the face of current difficult circumstances.

The Staff Governor (Support) sought clarification on Item R-4.1, specifically “for the next financial year”. Members were advised that “financial year” referred to the College’s financial year, ie from 1 August 2010, as opposed to the taxation financial year.

It was agreed that the Principal would report back to the Board on the outcome of his meeting with the Joint Negotiating Committee.

As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Mrs Adams, it was

RESOLVED *that the salaries of the Principal, Clerk to the Corporation, Senior Postholders and all other staff be held at their current value, apart from those staff whose salaries had not progressed to the top of their banding where the usual single increment would be paid.*

Further, it was

RESOLVED *that the College’s contributions to the lease vehicles of the Principal, Clerk to the Corporation, Senior Postholders and other senior staff would remain at their current levels.*

6. SEARCH COMMITTEE

6.1 Appointment of Member: Mr Andrew Parkinson, and Mentor

Members received and noted the extract from the minutes of the Search Committee meeting held on 2 July 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-6.1). Dr Finney, as Chairman of Search Committee, reported that Mr Parkinson’s current role was General Manager of the Bluewater Shopping Centre. During his career, he had a good record in leadership and management and the Committee had no hesitation in recommending him to the Board. The Vice Principal noted that he had met Mr Parkinson on many occasions at Bluewater in relation to the apprentice scheme and believed that he would be an asset to the Board. As proposed by Mr Moody seconded by Mr Parkes, it was

RESOLVED *to accept Mr Andrew Parkinson as a Member of the Corporate Board for a period of four years.*

Further, it was

RESOLVED *to appoint Mr Julian Parkes as mentor to Mr Andrew Parkinson.*

Action

Principal

Following his introduction, members welcomed Mr Parkinson to the Board.

Action

R-7 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

7.1 Data Protection Policy and Procedures

Members received and noted the Data Protection Policy and Procedures (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-7.1) which had been prepared by the Director of Student Services following recommendation by Internal Auditors during April 2010. The Principal stated that the policy followed statutory guidance. As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Mr Moody, it was

RESOLVED to adopt the Data Protection Policy and Procedures, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-7.1.

7.2 Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Members received and noted the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-7.2). The Principal reported that the Scheme had been substantially rewritten to reflect the model and guidance provided by the Information Commissioner. As proposed by Ms Birchenough and seconded by Mr Butterfield, it was

RESOLVED to adopt the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-7.2.

R-8 INTERIM REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING

Members received and noted the Interim Report on Safeguarding (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-8), which had been prepared by the College's Child Protection Officer (CPO), Mr Goodwin, who had liaised with the Nominated Governor for Child Protection, Mrs Jones.

The CPO presented the Interim Report, which followed the Local Authority's template, and confirmed that a copy would be sent to the local Children's Safeguarding Board. Members were reminded that Safeguarding was a limiting grade at inspection.

Members were advised that twenty-nine issues had been raised, of which six had been referred to Social Care. An independent advisor consulted by the College believed the number of issues raised was consistent with numbers expected in a College of this size. No allegations had been made against staff and no staff members had been reported to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

As Safeguarding included children and vulnerable adults, reference to "child protection concerns" on page 2 of the report would be amended, in future, to read "Safeguarding concerns". Also, the statistical information would

include reference to “no action being necessary” where issues had been raised but no further action was required, eg in the case of the twenty-three issues raised this year but not taken forward.

The CPO referred to the recommendations which had been made and advised that recommendations 3, 8 and 31 had now been actioned, recommendation 15 was awaiting the outcome of the reporting to ISA, and recommendation 30 was almost complete.

Members noted that the Annual Report on Safeguarding would be submitted to the Board in October. As proposed by Mr Parkes and seconded by Mr Moody, it was

RESOLVED *to accept the Interim Report on Safeguarding, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-8.*

R-9 THREE YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST INCLUDING ANNUAL BUDGET 2010/2011

Members received and noted the Three Year Financial Forecast including Annual Budget 2010/2011 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-9). The Director of Finance and Systems advised that he had included a new table and some notes on page 6 dealing with the issue of grants being reduced. He advised that a deficit of £500,000 was expected next year.

The Vice Chairman stated that there would be a loss to the College next year as a result of having over-recruited this year. The Principal acknowledged the threat to the public sector funding and stated that pre-May 2010 and the change in Government, the College had been advised that in-year adjustments would be possible. However that was no longer the case. He was hopeful that, by over-recruiting for 2010/2011, it would be less painful for the following year, even if no additional funding was forthcoming.

The Chairman advised that the situation could worsen and, in such event, the Principal was to notify the Clerk immediately if changes were required and not wait until the next scheduled Board meeting.

As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Mrs Adams, it was

RESOLVED *to adopt the Three Year Financial Forecast, as set out in Paper No CB/07.07.10/R-9.*

R-10 THREE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Members noted the comments made by the Principal under his Principal’s Report earlier.

Principal

R-11 ONE YEAR OPERATIONAL PLAN

Members noted the comments made by the Principal under his Principal's Report earlier.

I-1 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

1.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 8 June 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-1.1) were received and noted.

1.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

I-2 AUDIT COMMITTEE

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 9 June 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-2.1) were received and noted.

2.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

I-3 ESTATES COMMITTEE

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Estates Committee held on 15 June 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-3.1) were received and noted.

3.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

I-4 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 22 June 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-4.1) were received and noted.

4.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

I-5 REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

5.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on 2 July 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-5.1) were received and noted.

Action

5.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

I-6 SEARCH COMMITTEE

6.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Search Committee held on 2 July 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-6.1) were received and noted.

6.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

I-7 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO MAY 2010

Members received and noted the Management Accounts to May 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-7).

I-8 CAPITAL PROJECT STATUS REPORT, JUNE 2010

Members received and noted the Capital Project Status Report as at June 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-8).

I-9 USE OF CORPORATION SEAL 2009/2010

Members received and noted advice that the Corporation Seal had not been required during the period 12 May 2010 and 29 June 2010 (Paper No CB/07.07.10/I-9).

C-1 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RESERVED

C-2 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

5.30pm, Wednesday, 6 October 2010 in the Training Restaurant, Gravesend

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