

# CORPORATE BOARD

## NORTH WEST KENT COLLEGE

### Minutes of a meeting of the CORPORATE BOARD

held at 5.30pm on Wednesday, 6 October 2010 at Lower Higham Road, Gravesend

**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  
Mr R Higgins  
Mr A Parkinson  
Mr R Singh Gill  
Mr B Newell  
Mrs P Jones

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

#### **P-1 APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Ms D Wroblewski.

#### **P-2 MINUTES**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2010 were approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **2.2 Matters Arising**

##### **2.2.1 (R-4.1) Finance and General Purposes Committee**

##### **Redundancy Policy**

As the appeal clause contained within the Redundancy Policy had required clarification, the Clerk circulated a textual amendment,

#### **Action**

which he had agreed with the Chairman and Principal. Members were satisfied with the text and, as proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Newell, it was

**RESOLVED to adopt the revised wording relating to appeal contained in the Redundancy Policy, as circulated by the Clerk on 6 October 2010.**

### **P-3 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Members received and noted the Principal's Report (Paper No CB/06.10.10/D-1). The main items were highlighted for members:

The Principal advised that an Ofsted inspection was anticipated during the Autumn term, upon three weeks' notice. The College was preparing for that inspection; consultant inspectors were conducting a mock inspection this week.

The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announcement on 20 October 2010 was awaited and all detailed planning was contingent upon the outcome.

#### *1.3 High Level Summary*

At Appendix 1 of the Principal's Report were indicative results for 2009/10, which highlighted that achievement had increased by 5%. Further discussions on success rates would be heard at the Standards Committee meeting on 12 October 2010.

#### *2.1 Enrolments – Initial Update*

Members were advised that enrolments for September 2010 were being finalised. It was noted that Supported Learning (formerly Foundation Studies) were under-target at present, although further enrolments in this area were expected later in the process. A Levels and Access numbers were under-target, though it was noted that the entry criteria had been raised and the lower numbers were not unexpected. Professional Care, Business and Computing numbers were slightly lower than target, Performing Arts student numbers had increased and Engineering, Construction and Sport all continue to grow. Members noted that it was not usual for course changes to occur at this time of the year. The Principal believed that the College was "broadly on track" at present.

#### *3. Indications on Funding for 2011/12*

The outcome of the Government's announcement on 20 October was awaited, although it was not a positive picture emerging as far as funding for next year was concerned. Early indications are that 16-18 funding would be reduced by 3% and adults by 12-15%.

#### 4.1 *Changes to the relationship with KCC*

The Principal reported the recent Government announcement that 16-18 funding, which had been directed through the Local Authorities since April 2010, would be diverted to the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) from August 2010. He advised that the Local Authorities retained a 'commissioning' role, though it remains uncertain how this will work in practice. As for the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), the plan to reduce staffing numbers by forty percent was noted, with the existence of the SFA after April 2011 being in some doubt.

#### 4.2 *Skills Funding Agency downsizing*

The Principal reported that the Skills Funding Agency had been contacting the Chairmen of FE colleges in England to request an invitation to present financial models to the Board. Members were advised that the SFA had been invited to present to our Board prior to the next Board meeting, at 5pm on Wednesday, 15 December 2010.

#### 5.1 *Revision to Structure from 1 December 2010*

Members' attention was drawn to the revised organisational structure chart at Appendix 3 to the Principal's Report, which would be effective from 1 December 2010, following the retirement of the Director of Student Services.

#### 6.1 *Official Opening of Gravesend*

Attention was also drawn to the official opening of the Gravesend campus on Tuesday, 12 October 2010 at 11.45am, to which members had received invitations.

#### 6.2 *SusCon*

Members were advised that the £2m funding for the final stage of the SusCon project, which had been agreed verbally by the SFA, had not been forthcoming. If the funding was not received, it was likely that a twenty-five year lease from the Dartford Borough Council, as the lead accountable body, would be required. A further £1m would be required in order to fit out and enhance the interior of the premises.

#### 6.3 *The Learning Shop, Bluewater*

The Principal advised that the management of Bluewater had offered the College alternative, larger premises at the centre, on the Upper Mall at the site of the former nursery/crèche. Costings had been obtained and it was expected that £400,000 would be required to refit the new premises, of which Bluewater management had offered £200,000. At a meeting of the North West Kent College Training Trust, it had been agreed to transfer £200,000 from Trust funds to the College for this purpose. As refurbishment plans had been developed and contractors were ready to commence the refit, the

**Action**

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Principal was confident that the new premises would be ready for occupation by Christmas.

- 7.1 *Strategic Plan*
- 7.2 *Operational Plan 2009/10*
- 7.3 *Operational Plan 2010/11*

Further discussion was scheduled to take place at the Conference on Saturday, 9 October 2010.

#### 8. *Apprenticeship Training*

Recent comments, made by Government ministers, have resulted in some uncertainty about apprenticeship arrangements. Further clarification was required prior to action being taken by the College.

#### 9. *Inspection Preparation*

The Principal advised that a draft of the College Self Assessment Report (SAR) would be discussed by the members of the Standards Committee on 12 October.

### **R-1 AUDIT COMMITTEE**

#### **1.1 Internal Audit Annual Report 2009/2010**

Members received and noted the Internal Audit Annual Report 2009/2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-1.1). Mr Parkes, as Chairman of the Audit Committee, explained that the opinion within the report was the standard phrase used within audit reports and connoted the best judgement achievable. As proposed by Mr Newell and seconded by Dr Finney, it was

**RESOLVED** *to endorse the Audit Committee's recommendation of the Annual Internal Audit Report 2009/2010 (as detailed in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-1.1).*

#### **1.2 Annual Risk Management Report 2009/2010**

Members received and noted the Annual Risk Management Report 2009/2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-1.2). Members were advised that an overview of the main risks and the SMT's process of review would, in future, be included within the report. As proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Parkes, it was

**RESOLVED** *to adopt the Annual Risk Management Report 2009/2010, as detailed in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-1.2.*

**Action**

**1.3 RESERVED****1.4 IAS Strategic Plan 2010/2011**

Members received and noted the IAS Strategic Plan 2010/2011 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-2.3). The Chairman of the Audit Committee referred to the suggestion of particular items for audit during the next academic year. As proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Newell, it was

**RESOLVED to adopt the Internal Audit Strategic Plan 2009/2010, as detailed in set out in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-1.4.**

**1.5 Terms of Reference**

Members received and noted the Terms of Reference (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-1.5). Minor amendments were noted, including the reference to a “minimum of” four members on the Committee. As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Mrs Jones, it was

**RESOLVED to adopt the Terms of Reference, as set out in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-1.5.**

**R-2 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****2.1 Performance Indicators**

Members received and noted the Performance Indicators (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-2.1). Members were satisfied that all responses should be recorded in the affirmative. As proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Newell, it was

**RESOLVED to adopt the Finance and General Purposes Committee’s Performance Indicators as set out in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-2.1.**

**R-3 ANNUAL REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING 2009/2010**

Members received and noted the Annual Report on Safeguarding for 2009/2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-3), which had been prepared by the Child Protection Officer (CPO).

Presenting his report, the CPO reminded members that an interim report had been presented to the Board in July 2010, at which time some comments and suggestions had been made. The report before members had taken those comments into account and some improvements had been made to the structure. The Child Protection Champion (Mrs Jones) had discussed the report with the CPO prior to submission, as well as with the consultant

inspectors during the mock inspection this week. The consultant inspectors had given positive comments about the report.

The CPO advised that the Director of Faculty, BSFS, would assume the role of Deputy CPO upon the retirement of the Director of Student Services. Members were satisfied that the report contained the necessary assurances to the Board that the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy was effective and appropriate and, as proposed by Mr Moody and seconded by Ms Birchenough, it was

**RESOLVED to adopt the Annual Report on Safeguarding for 2009/2010, as detailed in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-3.**

#### **R-4 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

##### **4.1 Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy**

Members received and noted the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-4.1).

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) explained that the revised policy, based on the DfES model, had been amended to include examples of signs and symptoms of abuse, following the recommendation of an external consultant. Referring specifically to Appendix 6, the CPO advised that an additional policy on cyber-bullying had been included. Although Government consultation was awaited in relation to reporting concerns to the ISA, the CPO would be inserting a short statement into Appendix 9 which briefly outlined the reporting procedure as it stood currently.

Mrs Jones, as the governors' Child Protection Champion, reported that she had met with the consultant inspectors this week, who believed it would be useful to include a question at interview (for any role within the College) on the issue of safeguarding, thus drawing candidates' attention to the College's stance on this issue.

Members were satisfied that the policy was fit for purpose and, as proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Newell, it was

**RESOLVED to re-adopt the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, as amended in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-4.1.**

#### **R-5 ANNUAL REPORT ON INSTANCES OF WHISTLEBLOWING UNDER THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT 1988**

Members received and noted the Annual Report on instances of Whistleblowing under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1988 (Paper No

CB/06.10.10/R-5). Members were pleased to note that no cases had been reported, in the last year, under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1988. As proposed by Dr Finney and seconded by Mr Newell, it was

**Action**

**RESOLVED to adopt the Annual Report on Instances of Whistleblowing under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1988, as outlined in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-5.**

#### **R-6 OPERATIONAL PLAN 2009/2010**

Members received and noted the Operational Plan 2009/2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-6). Dr Finney believed further discussion was required, as he questioned the reason why key actions, which had been successful during the previous year, remained within the documentation as a key action for the current year. The Principal explained that the Senior Management Team was able to follow through actions in the document in its current form. The Chairman proposed that further review of the Operational Plan for 2009/2010 could be undertaken at the Conference on 9 October. Based on the document before members and, as proposed by Mrs Jones and seconded by Mr Newell, it was

**RESOLVED to accept the Operational Plan 2009/2010, as detailed in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-6, pending further discussion at the Second Corporate Conference on 9 October 2010.**

Clerk

#### **R-7 OPERATIONAL PLAN 2010/2011**

Members received and noted the Operational Plan 2010/2011 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-7). Members were comfortable with the Operational Plan 2010/2011 as submitted but were of the opinion that further debate on the content should be discussed at the Second Corporate Conference on 9 October 2010. As proposed by Mr Newell and seconded by Dr Finney, it was

**RESOLVED to accept the Operational Plan 2010/2011, as detailed in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-7, pending further discussion at the Second Corporate Conference on 9 October 2010.**

Clerk

Members were requested to ensure that both Operational Plans were brought to the Conference on 9 October.

**R-8 GOVERNORS' REVIEW GROUP**

**Action**

**8.1 Notes of meeting held on 1 March 2010**

Members received and noted the notes of the meeting held on 1 March 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.1).

**8.2 Notes of meeting held on 26 April 2010**

Members received and noted the notes of the meeting held on 26 April 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.2).

**8.3 Notes of meeting held on 7 September 2010**

Members received and noted the notes of the meeting held on 7 September 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.3).

The Chairman apologised for the delay in members receiving copies of the notes. However he assured members that, in future, full minutes would be circulated within appropriate timescales, should the proposed resolution at Item R-8.7 be agreed.

**RESERVED**

As proposed by Mr Newell and seconded by Mrs Jones, it was

**RESOLVED** *to accept the notes of the three meetings of the Governors' Review Group, as set out in Paper Nos CB/06.10.10/R-8.1 to R-8.3.*

**8.4 Terms of Reference of Estates and Facilities Committee**

Members received and noted the draft Terms of Reference of the Estates and Facilities Committee (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.4).

The Chairman explained that the Estates Committee Terms of Reference had been amended to include reference to 'facilities', in order to better identify the core role of the Committee. He reported that the Clerk was preparing proposed membership of the revised Committees, based on the skills audit. The Chairman explained that each member would become a member of at least one Committee.

Discussion ensued regarding the membership numbers for each Committee, with the request that some Committees might prefer more than four members. As proposed by Mr Newell and seconded by Dr Finney, it was



**RESOLVED** *to adopt the Terms of Reference of the Estates and Facilities Committee, as set out in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.4, subject to further discussion regarding membership of this Committee and others.*

Action

#### 8.5 Terms of Reference of Staff and Student Committee

Members received and noted the draft Terms of Reference of the Staff and Student Committee (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.5).

The Chairman reminded members that the Board had agreed originally to name this Committee the HR Committee. However the Governors' Review Group now recommended that the title should be amended to Staff and Student Committee. Again, it was hoped that the Terms provided a clearer indication of the core responsibilities of the Committee, which, it was proposed, would be chaired by Mr Newell.

In response to Mr Newell's question whether similar committees existed in other Colleges, the Clerk advised that he was aware of HR Committees but not aware of any Staff and Student Committees. Mr Newell believed that the new Committee would allow some engagement with students which, the Staff Governor advised, would be welcomed by students.

Mrs Adams asked whether staff surveys (clause 2.1.3) had been undertaken. The Principal advised that the last staff survey had been undertaken in 2005 but that consideration was being given at present to the timing of a further staff survey.

Referring to clause 2.3, concerning Health and Safety, the Chairman advised that accidents, incidents and 'near misses' could be referred to the Estates and Facilities Committee if this Committee considered action to be necessary. The Chairman referred to the possibility of Mrs Adams becoming governors' Health and Safety Champion, to ensure that appropriate monitoring was being carried out. Members agreed to the principle of a 'health and safety champion' but believed further discussion was necessary.

Clerk

Pending further discussion, as proposed by Mrs Jones and seconded by Mr Singh Gill, it was

**RESOLVED** *to adopt the Staff and Student Committee Terms of Reference, as set out in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.5, subject to further review of staff issues to be considered for inclusion in its remit.*

Clerk

#### 8.6 Terms of Reference of Quality and Curriculum Committee

Members received and noted the Terms of Reference of the Quality and Curriculum Committee (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.6).

Referring to clause 2.2, Dr Finney believed, and members agreed, that “Support Services Reviews” should be removed from the Terms of Reference. It was also noted that a decision had to be made as to the appropriate location for review of the Finance Department and the IS Department, in light of the Quality and Curriculum Committee’s remit for student matters only.

The Chairman reminded members that the core issues relevant to each Committee, eg staff wellbeing, student wellbeing, were being considered by the Clerk, who would be making proposals for membership of those committees.

As proposed by Mr Newell and seconded by Mrs Jones, it was

**RESOLVED to adopt the Quality and Curriculum Terms of Reference, as set out in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.6, subject to the removal of clause 2.2.**

Clerk

#### 8.7 **Terms of Reference of Governors’ Review Committee**

Members received and noted the draft Terms of Reference of the Governors’ Review Committee (Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.7).

The Chairman reminded members that the Governors’ Review Group had presented notes to the meeting but, if the Terms of Reference were adopted, full minutes would be produced for the Standing Committee and, exactly like all other standing committees, those minutes would be submitted at the subsequent meeting of the Board. As proposed by Mrs Jones and seconded by Mr Higgins, it was

**RESOLVED to adopt the Terms of Reference of the Governors’ Review Committee, as set out in Paper No CB/06.10.10/R-8.7.**

#### **R-9 RESERVED**

#### **R-10 ANNUAL REPORT ON MONITORING OF RACE EQUALITY AND POLICY**

As the Annual Report on Monitoring of Race Equality and Policy was not available to the Board, members considered instead Paper No CB/06.10.10/D-2, Student Equality and Diversity Overview 2009/2010.

#### **D-1 EVERY CHILD MATTERS – OVERVIEW OF 2009/2010**

Members received and noted the Report on Every Child Matters (Paper No CB/06.10.10/D-1).

<p>As the paper had only been tabled at this meeting [c.f. Principal’s assurance concerning timeliness of reports, item R-9 supra.], members deferred the item for consideration at an Extraordinary meeting of the Board, to be held at 9am on Saturday, 9 October 2010.</p>	<p><b>Action</b></p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>D-2 STUDENT EQUALITY AND DIVERSTY – OVERVIEW OF 2009/2010</b></p>	
<p>Members received and noted the Student Equality and Diversity Activity Report for 2009/2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/D-2).</p>	
<p>As the paper had only been tabled at this meeting [c.f. Principal’s assurance concerning timeliness of reports, item R-9, supra.], members deferred the item for consideration at an Extraordinary meeting of the Board, to be held at 9am on Saturday, 9 October 2010.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>I-1 AUDIT COMMITTEE</b></p>	
<p>1.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 15 September 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/I-1.1) were received and noted.</p>	
<p>1.2 <b>Matters Arising</b></p>	
<p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
<p><b>I-2 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE</b></p>	
<p>2.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 September 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/I-2.1) were received and noted.</p>	
<p>2.2 <b>Matters Arising</b></p>	
<p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
<p><b>I-3 FINANCIAL REVIEW – AUGUST 2010</b></p>	
<p>Members received and noted the Financial Review as at August 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/I-3).</p>	
<p>The Chairman reported that the asterisk had been removed in error and the paper would not be presented by the Director of Finance and Systems. Members discussed the removal of the asterisk and the proposal that the Director’s paper would not be discussed at the Board in future. Both Mrs Adams and Mr Newell expressed the opinion that the Director’s presentation of the paper was useful, particularly to those whose expertise lay in other areas. The Chairman explained that, in future, the management accounts</p>	

would be presented in a different, more informative format, by the Principal as the Corporation's Accounting Officer. He was confident that they would be comprehensible to all members.

**Action**

**I-4 CAPITAL PROJECT STATUS REPORT, SEPTEMBER 2010**

Members received and noted the Capital Project Status Report as at September 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/I-4).

**I-5 USE OF CORPORATION SEAL 2009/2010 and 2010/2011**

Members received and noted that the Corporation Seal had been used on four occasions during the period 30 June 2010 to 28 September 2010 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/I-5).

**I-6 TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE RATES 2010/2011**

Members received and noted the Travel and Subsistence rates for 2010/2011 (Paper No CB/06.10.10/I-6), which were at the same level as those applicable to staff.

**C-1 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None was raised.

**C-2 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

5.00pm, Wednesday, 15 December 2010 in the Boardroom at Dartford (presentation by SFA at 5pm, with the ordinary Board agenda to follow).