

LEEDS COLLEGE OF BUILDING

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 March 2011 at 3.30 pm in Meeting Room 1.

PRESENT:

C Harrigan (Chairperson)
I Billyard
Councillor G Driver
J Evans
A Finn
D Hutchinson
A Iveson
H Ramsden
P Rogerson
M White
D Whiteley

IN ATTENDANCE:

D Pullein (Executive Director - Finance)
R Scanlan (Clerk to the Corporation and Executive Director - Support Services)
D Whitehead (Deputy Principal and Executive Director – Curriculum and Quality)
K Rolinson (HR Manager) – for Agenda items 7 and 9 a)
N Fearnside (Secretary – minutes)

**ACTION
BY AND
TARGET DATE**

1. CHAIRPERSON'S COMMUNICATIONS

C Harrigan noted that the revised Skills Audit and Declaration of Interest form had been circulated to members and asked that these be returned as soon as possible.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Staff members declared an interest in Agenda Items 7 and 9 a).

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from A Gamble, M Joyce, J Speight, and S Waite.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2010 were approved as a true record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5.1 Ref Min 7

D Pullein stated that, as reported to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, a modelling system is available which allows colleges to input their own figures to obtain an individual FRS17 assumption. A joint college consortium bid is being put together and if enough colleges are interested then an actuary could be appointed to model individual assumptions, subject to Corporation approval.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5.2

Councillor Driver stated that £500k was available through the Council for training / youth opportunities. D Whitehead would liaise with him outside the meeting with regard to this.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

I Billyard presented the Principal's Report for Spring 2011. The following points were noted:

Students from the Faculty of Mechanical & Electrical Services won 11 awards at the recent HVCA (Heating & Ventilating Contractors' Association) competition.

The provision of Environmental Technology courses continues to be developed in conjunction with the National Skills Academy.

The Faculty of Construction Crafts is currently exploring the possibilities of delivering training and apprenticeships in internal and external wall insulation and discussions are taking place with Sto Ltd; an international group of companies who are looking to set up a training centre in the UK.

The regional and national finals of SkillBuild will be held at the College in May and September. The Skills M&E finals will be held at the College at the same time in September.

The Faculty of HE & Construction Management is involved in the WorldSkills competition; normally associated with craft-related events. A project is being co-ordinated through Edexcel. The College is also involved in the development of an Eco house for WorldSkills, together with other colleges.

Results from recent Functional Skills tests are not very positive; English Writing Level 1 only achieved a 42% pass rate. Functional Skills outcomes may ultimately affect Apprenticeship Frameworks; although Key Skills can still be offered for Apprenticeships until 2012.

Responses to student surveys are 90% or above for the three main statements (I am achieving what I came to do; I am enjoying being at College and I would recommend the College to a friend).

J Evans felt that there was a lot of pressure being put on young people with learning difficulties due to the Government's cuts and asked if this was a problem for the College. D Pullein stated that funding for Additional Learning Support (ALS) is now included in the overall budget and therefore it is up to the College how to allocate this. It was stressed that timely information from schools is essential to ensure that support is in place as soon as possible.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (continued)

R Scanlan explained that ALS is picked up in two ways: 1) students are statemented at school – which usually follows students through from school or 2) students declare a learning difficulty on enrolment – assessments are carried out by the College and support provided as appropriate.

D Pulein stated that no support is available for Key Skills (Maths / English) and therefore the College has to fund this.

Councillor Driver stressed that the Children's Act (2004) is about providing services that children need and the Director of Children's Services should be emphasising that sharing of information is crucial.

Councillor Driver reported that the Localism Bill would have a negative impact on the provision of public sector housing. D Whiteley stated that Housing Associations would need to look at alternative financing options.

The Corporation received the Report.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

7. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

See attached minute.

8. UPDATE ON PROPERTY MATTERS

R Scanlan reported that R Ashmore has been appointed to assist in acquiring land / building opportunities for the College and the Executive Team met with him recently to consider 11 potential sites which have been identified. These were shortlisted to 5 sites, all of which are close to the City Centre and the Executive Team visited these with R Ashmore.

The BAM site on Whitehall Road was also shortlisted, because there may be potential benefits of working with BAM although the location was not one of the preferred options.

R Ashmore has been asked to progress these sites in more detail and report back to the Executive Team. An update would be given at the next Corporation meeting.

RS
10 May 2011

R Scanlan gave a brief update on the Renewal Grant received from the SFA. Tendering is being progressed for this work, which includes replacing the mains switchgear and fuseboards; voltage optimisation; photovoltaic panels at North Street; lighting replacement and replacement of windows at North Street. It is anticipated that the majority of these works will provide energy efficiency savings for the College in the longer term.

A further Capital Works Grant Allocation of £86,320 has just been made available from the SFA and possible works are being considered. As with the Renewal Grant the College would have to match fund this with an additional two thirds, ie £172,640.

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

9. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

a) Redundancy Policy

R Scanlan presented the revised Redundancy Policy, which has been considered by the Employment Committee. The Unions have been consulted on this Policy and item 9.3 has subsequently been amended at their request to reflect that the College would consider enhanced redundancy payments when redundancy situations are proposed, depending on financial circumstances at the time.

The Corporation approved the Redundancy Policy.

b) Safer Recruitment Policy

R Scanlan presented the Safer Recruitment Policy, which has been considered by the Employment Committee. The Policy pulled together all the safeguarding elements associated with the recruitment of staff, including the Vetting & Barring scheme. This is soon to be revised soon and the Policy will need to reflect any changes.

The Corporation approved the Safer Recruitment Policy.

FINANCE ISSUES

10. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT POSITION STATEMENT AS AT 28 FEBRUARY 2011

It was noted that the Income and Expenditure account is forecasting a small surplus, despite reductions in planned income from tuition fees and Education Contracts. The balance sheet is extremely strong with very high cash balances. 16-18 recruitment remains a concern and every attempt is being made to recruit more students, with Easter and Summer Schools planned.

There were currently less debtors showing in the 90 and 120 day categories, compared to the same period last year. A larger amount is shown in the 60 day category, however this is mainly monies due from Leeds City Council and this is being progressed.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee had discussed the Treasury Management Policy and suggested a maximum of £50k cumulative interest should be rolled over on deposits. This was approved by the Corporation.

11. SFA LETTER - CONFIRMATION OF LEARNER RESPONSIVE FUNDING ASSURANCE AUDIT

The letter from the Skills Funding Agency was noted, confirming that an unqualified audit opinion has been received, following the Learner Responsive Funding Assurance audit.

12. SFA LETTER - PROVIDER FINANCIAL ASSURANCE TEAMS' FINAL REPORT

The letter from the Skills Funding Agency was noted, confirming that the Provider Financial Assurance Team concurred with the College's overall self-assessed grade of Outstanding for its Financial Management and Control Evaluation (FMCE).

13. SFA LETTER – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2009/10

The letter from the Skills Funding Agency was noted, confirming that the College's financial health was Outstanding, following a review of the College's Financial Statements for 2009/10.

GOVERNANCE

14. REVISED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Clerk presented a brief paper outlining the revised model of Governance which was discussed and agreed at the Governors' Awayday. The recommendations from the Awayday were as follows:

- The Board should adopt a semi Carver Model where the Board would meet nine times per year (three per term).
- Three sub-committees should be retained; Audit, Search and Remuneration.
- Agendas should be focused on strategic matters.
- Annual self assessment of the operation of the Board should take place with collective input.
- Evaluation of each meeting should take place (at least initially) and individual review meetings with the Chair should take place during the course of the year.
- Agendas and papers should be placed on the Governors' portal for electronic access.

The Clerk stated that the Student Liaison Committee had met last week and when asked about possible means of communicating with Governors, the students felt that the current system worked well. It was therefore suggested that the Student Liaison Committee also be retained; this was agreed. R Scanlan noted that some interest in mentoring by Governors had been shown.

The Clerk stated that the Audit Committee required one member and it was agreed that a volunteer should be sought. R Scanlan would action accordingly.

RS
1 April 2011

It was recommended that the revised format should be implemented following this meeting. The process will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is working effectively.

The Corporation approved the revised Governance structure.

15. ACTION POINTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

The outstanding action points from the sub-committees which were not continuing were noted:

Employment Committee

- The HR Strategy would be presented at the next Board meeting.

RS
10 May 2011

Finance & General Purposes Committee

- A report regarding variations of insurance cover would be given at the next Board meeting.

DP
10 May 2011

Quality Committee

- The Post Inspection Action Plan was considered at the Governors' Awayday.
- A report on Destinations would be presented at the next Board meeting.
- The revised OTL Policy and Procedure would be presented at the next Board meeting.
- Strategies to improve teaching and learning would be presented at the next Board meeting.

DW
10 May 2011

DW
10 May 2011

DW
10 May 2011

A discussion had taken place at the last Search Committee regarding the possibility of introducing "Friends of LCB" – a network of people who wished to be associated with the College. R Scanlan confirmed that this was being progressed with Marketing. A paper on possible ways it could work would be prepared for the June Board meeting.

RS
21 June 2011

16. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Clerk reported that the Search Committee considered membership issues and noted that the period of office for a number of members expired during 2011. The Committee recommended that David Hutchinson and James Ingham be re-appointed for a period of one year commencing 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

The Corporation considered the recommendation and approved the re-appointment of D Hutchinson as an external member for the period 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012 and J Ingham as an external co-opted member of the Audit Committee for the same period.

It was noted that the period of office for several members expires later this academic year; these will be considered at a future Board meeting.

17. SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the following sub-committee meetings were received:

- Employment Committee – 29 November 2010
- Finance and General Purposes Committee (Draft) – 2 March 2011
- Search Committee – 18 February 2011
- Student Liaison Committee – 7 December 2011.

17. SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES (continued)

D Pullein gave a brief update on the Landsbanki situation. Eversheds instructed Logos to progress the College's claim and the last update to Eversheds indicated that Logos were still waiting for the Winding up Board to convene a dispute resolution meeting; which is likely to be in the first half of this year. The next anticipated stages are for Logos to contact the Winding up Board for further information / update and to attend the meeting on behalf of the College. Following an earlier email to F&GP members it was agreed that the above stages would be instigated. If the Winding up Board did not decide in the College's favour then the next stage would be a contested hearing, at a cost of approximately £45k; this would be brought back to the Board for further discussion as appropriate.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Corporation meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 10 May 2011 at 3.30 pm.

Signed for Distribution:
(Chair)

Date:

Approved:
(Chair)

Date: