



Shaping your future

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation
held on Monday 16 May 2011
at 5.30 pm in Room C15**

Present:

Guy Adams	Chair	Present	Sue Popplewell	Staff Member	Present
Peter Avery	<i>Ex Officio</i> Member	Present	Oliver Price	Student Member	Present
Garry Charles	Member	Present	John Rudge	Member	Present
Jo Gill	Parent Member	Present	Jane Scott	Clerk to Corporation	Present
Ann Helsby	Member	Present	Rob Setchell	Staff Member	Present
Harry Hodgkin	Parent Member	Present	Gill Turner	Member	Present
Jill Jeffreys	Parent Member	Present from 5.45 pm	Mary Tighe	Member	Present
Hollie King	Member	Present	David Wood	Deputy Chair	Present
John Lockwood	Member	Apologies	Jonathan Langdon	Member	Present
Dominic Lynch	Member	Present	Lucy Yarde	Student Member	Apologies
John Abbott	Director: Curriculum and Quality	In attendance	Carole Melia	Director: Curriculum and Student Support	In attendance
Martyn Owen	Director: Curriculum and Operations	In attendance	Paul Smith	Director: Curriculum and Enrichment	In attendance
Paul Dampier	Director: Curriculum and Business Development	In attendance	Alice Brayley	Student Member	Present
Sariha Tarafdar	Student Member	Present			

The meeting opened at 5.32 pm and was quorate throughout.

PART 1: MEETING FORMALITIES

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence are recorded above.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of personal or financial interest in the business of the meeting.

3. Appointment of Student Members of the Corporation

Members of the Corporation noted the recommendations in respect of the appointments of Alice Brayley and Sariha Tarafdar as members of the Corporation. Mary Tighe proposed that the recommendations be approved, seconded by Gill Turner, and agreed *nem con*. Members of the Corporation noted their appreciation of the contribution which Lucy Yarde and Oliver Price had made to the work of the Corporation during their period of appointment. Members also noted the significant value which they place on the contributions made by Student Members.

4. Minutes of the Meetings Held on Monday 14 March 2011 and the Strategic Planning Meeting Held on Friday 1 April 2011

14 March 2011

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record.

1 April 2011

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising which are not dealt with under the agenda for the current meeting.

6. Any Other Business

The Chair of Corporation noted two items of any other business for discussion as Closed Business at the end of the current meeting.

PART 2: ITEMS OF PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

1. The Principal's Report to the Corporation

Members noted that the information given in the Principal's Report to the Corporation indicated that the measures taken to secure savings in respect of 2011-12 would not have a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning within the College. However, there is no guarantee that this position can be maintained in subsequent years of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

In respect of Key Performance Indicators, it was noted that there are now more lesson observations graded at level 3. Members learned that this is in part attributed to the timing of the current rounds of observations at the start of teaching of new course units; it is anticipated that the process next year will be timed to ensure optimal comparison of data. Collaborative work is now in hand with Hereford College to seek Ofsted guidance about whether every member of staff needs to be observed every year, with a preference to work with those teaching areas where there is weaker performance.

The Principal noted that contrary to recent information about the County bus ticket, the College has now learned that there will be a further increase to the cost of the ticket, and with restrictions placed on its usage. The ticket will continue to be available to students travelling to the College from Devon. A revised scheme will be published by 31 May 2011. Somerset colleges are working in close collaboration to ensure optimal support for students. Recruitment to the College is currently falling behind the same period last year, but still with the potential to exceed target and have 50 unfunded students, positively impacting on funding going forwards.

2. Development Planning

Estate Development

The meeting noted that receipt of grant from the Young Peoples' Learning Agency is conditional upon the timing of expenditure, and that the College has had to instigate a tight schedule in respect of the proposed building programme. It is anticipated that a building programme scheduled to start in August 2011 will be completed in a timely manner to satisfy the criteria associated with use of the grant ie full expenditure of grant to have taken place by 31 March 2012. Expedition of the work can only be achieved through the waiving of the normal tendering process.

In respect of the building of the six-classroom teaching block, the College has agreed to work with the project consultants, architects and contractors on the basis of a project which

will be costed at 1% profit/2% overheads - the design to be worked according to price. It is not anticipated that there will be planning objections; planning restrictions should only be limited to the height of the building and sympathetic use of materials within a conservation area. The meeting noted that there will be no loss of parking facilities, and that there will be no further requirement for temporary classroom space once the accommodation is completed.

In respect of the College desire to waive the requirement for the project to be subject to tender, members noted the Letter of Comfort provided by the project consultants with whom there is already a long-standing working relationship. Lloyds TSB bankers have already given their approval to the virement of loan facilities from the Maple Building extension project to the current capital project.

Jill Jeffreys proposed that the following recommendations be approved, seconded by Dominic Lynch, and agreed *nem con*:

- The planned work to Maple Building be delayed indefinitely
- The tender process in respect of the building of six new classrooms be waived
- Baker Ruff/Steel Colman Davis/Mansell be appointed as project consultants/architects/contractors on the six classroom project
- A total project cost of £1350,000 to include demolition of temporary classrooms, the building of six new classrooms (£950k) and the refurbishment of Beech building (£400k), including the work already planned on Beech building.

The meeting noted that in order for the different projects to be overseen in an efficient manner, the most effective way would be for the Finance and General Purposes Committee to operate for the duration of all the project work as the Capital Planning Committee, ensuring that there is minimum potential for confusion in the financial monitoring process. The Director of Finance should also be a member of the Committee. Garry Charles proposed that the Finance and General Purposes Committee be tasked to undertake the duties of a Capital Planning Committee. This was seconded by Jonathan Langdon and agreed *nem con*.

The Development Plan

During 2010-11, the draft Development Plan had been subject to review and consideration at all committee meetings, as well as being pivotal to the discussion at the strategic planning meetings. Mary Tighe proposed that the current Development Plan be adopted for the remainder of the academic year, seconded by Dominic Lynch and agreed *nem con*. Given that the Development Plan is a 'live' document, work on revisions is already under way and committees of the Corporation will be asked to give their continuing review to the Plan as it evolves in response to changes in the sector.

3. The Student Voice and Huish Ambassadors

The Assistant Principals: Curriculum and Enrichment and Curriculum and Student Support presented the meeting with a summary of the benefits and positive impact which appropriate recognition of the learner voice can bring to every aspect of College activity. A copy of the presentation is appended to the papers for the meeting. Members also learned about how the College will develop the use of student ambassadors to not only assist new students at the College but to provide important feedback about student views.

Student ambassadors will also be influential in the way the College promotes best practice in a number of areas, but particularly use of IT - it is critical that students understand their rights and their responsibilities and the implications if they do not behave responsibly in their use of electronic communication. This is particularly relevant in cases of e-bullying and the potential for redress to be sought under provision contained within the Harassment Act. Members noted that students are already involved in the staff appointments process, contributing to the work of the selection committee.

4. Corporation Communication and Security of Papers

All members had received the paper summarising the operational detail associated with the way in which the Clerk to the Corporation will be communicating Corporation business with members. Members of the Corporation noted that some changes have been necessary to ensure that the Corporation operates more efficiently, effectively and safely, particularly in respect of the transmission of data. Whilst it was difficult to be prescriptive about every aspect of the management of meeting papers, members were reminded of the importance of giving due consideration to the handling, storage and disposal of meeting papers.

PART 3: ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

- **The Safeguarding Policy** was recommended for approval by Mary Tighe, seconded by Gill Turner, and approved *nem con*.
- **The Quality Policy** - members were advised of a number of ways in which the College seeks assurance about the quality of its provision at all levels, including Alps benchmarking, ALIS, working with Hereford Sixth Form College, and the benchmarking data produced by the Internal Audit Service. The Quality Policy was recommended for approval by Gill Turner, seconded by Rob Setchell, and approved *nem con*.
- **The Personnel Policy** was recommended for approval by Harry Hodgkin, seconded by Ann Helsby and approved *nem con*.
- **The Redundancy Policy** - members noted that the Policy had been invoked on a number of occasions, and that it had stood the rigours of practical testing. Subject to clarification of 'normal retiring age' in 3.1 (iv), Dominic Lynch recommended approval of the Policy, seconded by Mary Tighe, and approved *nem con*.
- **The Job Description of the Clerk to the Corporation** was recommended for approval by Rob Setchell, seconded by Mary Tighe, and approved *nem con*.

Reports from Committees

The following points were highlighted in respect of Reports from Committees:

Audit Committee

Members noted that the Committee would progress the preparatory work involved with the tendering process associated with appointment of the External Audit Service. Due consideration will be given to the Corporation's requirements in respect of external audit services, and a recommendation reached in time to seek the Corporation's approval at its meeting in December 2011. Particular attention will be given to a scoring system evaluating tender presentations.

Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Committee had noted the College review of the way in which the refundable deposit could be optimally used in respect of printed course materials. Hitherto students have paid on an *ad hoc* basis for course materials, with significant departmental variance in what the student has to purchase. A change to a more equitable system of a partly refundable deposit, based on the College retaining £30 of the £70 payment from all students would ensure that the costs of printed course materials were covered. The College is seeking advice in respect of the implications of retaining the refundable element of the deposit for those students who have not sought a refund. Harry Hodgkin recommended approval of the proposed new system, seconded by Gill Turner, and approved *nem con*.

Personnel Committee

It was noted that teaching staff had received a pay settlement of 0.75%.

Search Committee

Members noted that no definitive position had yet been reached in respect of the national consultation on the Code of Governance.

Closed Business

- (a) The meeting noted the forthcoming retirement of the Vice Principal: Resources and agreement was reached in respect of a governor presentation and event to mark the occasion. The Clerk to the Corporation will advise members of arrangements in due course.
- (b) The Principal was able to provide the meeting with a letter setting out legal opinion in respect of the College management structure and the appointment of senior post holders. Members noted that there were a number of implications inherent in the advice, and that it would not be possible to give full consideration to the matter at the current meeting. The matter was referred to a meeting of the Personnel Committee for informed discussion. The Committee would be asked to report its discussion at the next meeting of the Corporation.

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 8.02 pm.

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record

Date.....

Signed.....