

THE SOUTH DOWNS COLLEGE CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 5.45 pm on Thursday 3 July 2008 in the Committee Room

Present: Andrew Turner (Chairman), Frederick Allgood, Richard Andrews, Gwen Blackett, Scott Carless, Yvonne Elliott, Donna Kinnair, Stephenie Linham, Laxmi Neave (appointed at minute 728) Michael Oakes (Principal), Philip Robinson, Patricia Thompson, Tony Welch

In Attendance: John Manterfield, Clerk to the Corporation
Julius Mach, Head of Finance
Susan Grantham, Minuting Secretary

The Chairman welcomed Laxmi Neave and outlined the format of meetings.

725. Minutes (Circulated with the agenda)

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13 March 2008 were AGREED whereupon the Chairman SIGNED the minutes.

726. Search Committee

- (i) Minutes of the meeting of the Search Committee and co-opted members held on 10 June 2008.
(Doc.C08/08 was circulated with the agenda)

The special meeting, included co-opted members Frederick Allgood, Donna Kinnair and Patricia Thompson, and recommendations were noted to be separate item 3(ii) and 4 on the Corporation agenda. The Chairman reported the Committee had taken into consideration the difficulties in recruiting Corporation members and noted the valuable contribution of current members. The former categories (business, community, local authority, and co-opted) were now replaced in the new Instrument and Articles of Government with the category 'members who appear to the Corporation to have the necessary skills to ensure that the Corporation carries out its functions under article 3 of the Articles of Government'. Rather than carry vacancies the Committee had considered it sensible that membership be determined at 15, a reduction of 2, on the basis that membership could always be increased at a later stage. In respect of the two local authorities (currently Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Havant Borough Council HBC)), the Committee felt representation was very valuable but rather that members should be selected by the College. He was very pleased that Cllr Allgood represented HCC. Recruiting a member from HBC was noted to be more difficult.

The minutes of the Search Committee held on 10 June 2008 were RECEIVED.

- (ii) Implications of the Updated Instrument and Articles of Government
(Doc.C08/09 was circulated with the agenda)

The Clerk noted the Corporation (13.03.08) had discussed the implications of the revised Instrument and Articles of Government. The recommendations of the specially convened Search Committee (10.06.08) to determine new Terms of Reference to the Search Committee, and Rules specifying the way in which the Search Committee is to be conducted were as contained in Doc. C08/09 Parts A and B

- A Revised terms of reference to the Search Committee
in line with the Articles of Government for Further Education Colleges 2007

On the recommendation of the Search Committee (10.06.08), revised terms of reference to the Search Committee (10.06.08) were AGREED, namely:

'To advise on

- (a) the appointment of members (other than as a parent, staff or student member); and

- (b) such other matters relating to membership and appointments as the Corporation may ask it to.

The Corporation shall not appoint any person as a member (other than as a parent, staff or student member) without first consulting and considering the advice of the search committee.'

B Rules specifying the way in which the Search Committee is to be conducted
in line with the Articles of Government for Further Education Colleges 2007.

On the recommendation of the Search Committee (10.06.08), the following rules specifying the way in which the Search Committee is to be conducted were AGREED and that these rules be published on the College website.

'Taking into account any profiles of skills needed as determined by the Corporation from time to time, the Search Committee will evaluate potential candidates referred to it either through self-referral (potential governors volunteering to serve), or response to advertisements or referral by other members of the Corporation (including the Principal), by the Clerk or by third parties.

The Search Committee may also seek potential governors by approaching those who belong to local authorities, voluntary and community groups, trade associations or other bodies and organisations, those in business, employment or otherwise, as it thinks fit. Potential candidates may be asked to submit a curriculum vitae and be invited to meet informally with the Principal and/or Chairman/Vice-Chairman.'

727. Composition of the Corporation
(Doc.C08/10 was circulated with the agenda)

The Clerk referred to the Chairman's verbal report (Minute 726 (i)).

On the recommendation of the Search Committee regarding the composition of the Corporation it was AGREED -

- (i) that the membership numbers be determined at 15 namely 10 members under Clause 2 (1) (a) (members who appear to the Corporation to have the necessary skills to ensure that the Corporation carries out its functions under article 3 of the Articles of Government); the Principal (under Clause 2 (1)(d)); two staff members (under Clause 2 (1) (e)); and two students (under 5 Clause 2 (1)(f)).
- (ii) that all other things being equal the Corporation would anticipate having governors chosen from the two relevant local authorities Hampshire County Council and Havant Borough Council.

728. Corporation Membership

The Clerk noted the two vacancies - one support staff; one student – and the recommendations to appoint Laxmi Neave, Deputy Reception Manager; and Rina Khanom who was just completing AS Level Studies in English Language, Sociology and Law.

On the proposal of the Chairman it was AGREED unanimously that:

- (i) Laxmi Neave be appointed as a support staff member under Clause 2(1)(e) of the Instrument of Government duly nominated and elected by the support staff of the College for a period of 4 years with effect from 3 July 2008.
- (ii) Rina Khanom be appointed as a student member under clause 2 (1)(f) of the Instrument of Government duly nominated and elected by the students with effect from 3 July 2008 for the period to 31 July 2009 or until she ceases to be a student of the College.

The Corporation recorded thanks to Wendy Gisborne, who had resigned on 2 July, for her valued contribution over 8 years.

729. Appointment of Chairman

The Clerk noted that Andrew Turner's term of office was due to expire on 8 July and he had expressed a willingness to stand for a further two years.

On the proposal of Gwen Blackett seconded by Yvonne Elliott it was AGREED unanimously that Andrew Turner be re-appointed as Chairman of the Corporation for a period of two years with effect from 9 July 2008.

On behalf of the Corporation Gwen Blackett expressed thanks to the Chairman for his considerable and continued support. The Principal concurred.

730. Committee Membership

The Clerk noted that two appointments to the Premises and Staff Appeals Committees were due to expire. In addition, the resignations of David Rowlinson and Wendy Gisborne had left one vacancy each on the Finance and Employment, Standards and Quality, Premises, and Search Committees. Historically the support staff governor had been a member of the Premises Committee and Laxmi Neave had expressed a willingness to serve. The Clerk invited expressions of interest for the remaining three Committees but noted that, in view of the reduced membership of the Corporation from 17 to 15, members may wish to re-determine the membership of the Corporation's Committees.

On the proposal of Tony Welch, seconded by Donna Kinnair the following were unanimously AGREED:

- (i) the re-appointment of Stephenie Linham as member of the Premises Committee for a period of two years until 4 July 2010
- (ii) the re-appointment of Richard Andrews as a member of the Staff Appeals Committee for a period of two years until 6 July 2010
- (iii) the appointment of Laxmi Neave as a member of the Premises Committee for a period of 2 years until 2 July 2010.
- (iv) Furthermore the following proposals were AGREED:
 - (a) That Standards and Quality Committee Membership be re-determined from 7 to 6 members. (Currently – A Turner (Chair), G Blackett, Y Elliott, P Robinson, T Welch, M Oakes).
 - (b) That Search Committee Membership remain at 5 members. (Currently – A Turner (Chair), G Blackett, Stephenle Linham, M Oakes, and That Patricia Thompson be appointed for a period of two years with effect from 3 July 2008.
 - (c) That Finance and Employment Committee Membership remain at 6 members (Currently – S Linham (Chair), G Blackett, A Turner, T Welch, M Oakes) and That Cllr Frederick Allgood be appointed for a period of two years with effect from 1 August 2008. Cllr Allgood noted he was the Finance Portfolio holder for Hampshire County Council.

731. Academic Board

(Doc.C08/11 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal highlighted the very successful annual One World Week organised by the Head of Student Services and the links she is developing within the local community, police and others. He commended the work of the John Manterfield and the Staff Development Committee and the successful re-accreditation of the Investor in People Award. All staff

would be involved in the staff development day on 11 July which was focussing on the Personalised Development Programme, a programme the College was developing for all students to be aware of their entitlement at College and help them achieve their aims.

Gwen Blackett noted the events/strategies being successfully developed with male students.

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2008 were RECEIVED.

732. Premises Committee

- (i) Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2008
(Doc.C08/12 was circulated with the agenda)

Richard Andrews noted the Accommodation Strategy and Proposed North West Building Phase II were separate items on the agenda. He highlighted the College's culture of new build and the continuous programme of minor works (minute 109) that take place throughout the year which are essential to maintain the high standard of College resources, and congratulated the College on this achievement. Referring to the Accommodation Strategy he noted the developments since 1992 comprising 14 capital building projects totalling £11.2 million with £7.4 being paid out of College reserves, which reflected the excellent management of College finances and the importance being placed on the learner environment.

In terms of the new North West Building, the Accommodation Strategy is written one year after the College's Strategic Plan which had not forecast a building of this sort at this stage. Facilities were shifting around government priorities and it was excellent that the College was able to respond in such a positive manner due to its successful management of capital reserves.

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2008 were RECEIVED.

- (ii) Accommodation Strategy
(Doc.C08/13 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary referred members to the plan of the College campus on the first page of the report and gave an overview of the split of College floorspace and developments to date. Section 1 gave an overview of the College estate, a total of 22,500 m², with 98% in good quality permanent buildings. The proportion of premium building was increasing over time and eradicating temporary buildings erected up to 20 years ago. The College was continuously identifying and working towards meeting the needs of students which now included general classroom accommodation to meet the increase in student population, and an increase in larger rooms to accommodate more students accompanied by their Learning Support Assistants. Room specifications had increased to include ICT equipment, projectors, white boards etc. Increased student social space was required to enhance the College experience and enable students to gather to talk about projects/assignments with access to wifi facilities. Targets are agreed with the LSC on an annual basis.

Section 3 represents an evaluation of the existing data on each building. Para 3.4 highlights curriculum considerations that impinge on the current space. Particular factors are the need for improved accommodation for art, design and media which is currently split between 4 buildings. Moving art from the East building would allow an extension to Engineering which is also constrained by space. The College will continue its important community-based provision with some 700 students attending evening classes on site Monday to Thursday, and a number of adult students at 50 venues in the community, including Leigh Park, Cowplain School, and Friendship House in Southsea. The plan on page 12 indicates the constraints to development including the high pressure gas main that supplies Portsmouth, and the power supply to the Crookhorn Estate.

The one obvious area for development would be for the North West Building Phase II in the north-west corner to mirror the current North West Building. In terms of suitability and

functionality the campus comprises purpose-built college accommodation. The temporary classrooms are not purpose-built and have many drawbacks.

Figures show space utilisation and running costs to be very efficient and benchmarking of space utilisation against other colleges compare very well. Access for people with disabilities continues to be a priority.

Section 4 outlines Opportunities for Development with New Build (Para 4.3) including the North West Building Phase II; the area occupied by the Coffee House; and opportunities for specialist music accommodation in the area occupied by Cabins M and T1. Also noted was the possibility of the Campdown development in the fields to the south of the College, subject to the land being available and agreement being reached between the land owners, Havant Borough Council and other agencies, for the development of sports facilities and an all weather pitch. This was very much dependent on others and would take longer to come to fruition.

Responding to Gwen Blackett, the College Secretary noted the North West Building Phase II would free up 8 parking spaces currently taken up with temporary buildings and provide an additional 10 spaces. Responding to Cllr Allgood, the College Secretary outlined developments to reduce carbon dioxide emissions including a new lighting system in the main building, to be completed in July. The design of new buildings had particular emphasis on energy sustainability and it was essential to comply with LSC requirements for capital project support. Yvonne Elliott noted the College ethos of encouraging staff and students to recycle paper, the College's Environmental Committee, the recent Green Day to raise awareness of environmental issues; and the College's car share scheme. The College pays Havant Borough to collect paper waste for recycling.

Gwen Blackett noted the lack of progress from Havant Borough Council on the Campdown project. Members noted facilities available elsewhere and Yvonne Elliott emphasised the importance to have these on site so that travelling time did not eat into student timetables. Gwen Blackett noted a possible suitable facility at the rear of Morelands School depending on whether planners and landowners would be agreeable to development. Members were impressed with the recently completed Climbing Wall.

The Accommodation Strategy 2008-2011 was AGREED.

- (iii) Proposed North West Building Phase II
(Doc.C08/14 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary outlined the plans displayed in the Committee Room. The proposal was for a mirror image of the current North West building with accommodation for Art, Design and Media, and general teaching classrooms with IT facilities. This would free up the existing Art Studio for student social space (with good access to existing kitchens) to be refurbished during summer 2009, and other areas in the East Building for Engineering use. The build would provide a good addition to the campus based on the successful features of the existing building – providing for cross ventilation of classrooms, 2 elevations for main classrooms using natural light to reduce energy consumption. Following the approval of the Premises Committee (22.05.08) a planning application was ready for submission on 4 July for the planning meeting at the end of August. A capital building project bid was being progressed.

Richard Andrews noted the tight timescale for planning application and the College Secretary noted discussions had taken place with planners and the College was quietly confident that approval would be received. The proposed new building would be put out to tender to three contractors.

The update was RECEIVED and it was AGREED unanimously

- (1) To endorse the decision of the Premises Committee to agree the approval of Phase II of the North West Building and that planning permission be sought and a capital project submission be made to the LSC.

(2) That the Principal and College Secretary be authorised to enter into contracts accordingly.

733. Standards and Quality Committee
(Doc.C08/15 was circulated with the agenda)

Philip Robinson noted the Committee had received with interest the Assistant Principal's report on quality and had congratulated him on the detailed work undertaken. Minute 165 outlined discussions on employer engagement and work to develop the government's skills agenda. The College's growing responsibility was noted and the Committee looked forward to receiving the Principal's update at the next meeting. The Principal confirmed the College needed to develop employer engagement and move into the area of apprenticeships.

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2008 were RECEIVED.

734. Audit Committee

(i) Minutes of meeting held on 12 June 2008
(Doc.C08/16 was circulated with the agenda)

Donna Kinnair was pleased to report that once again the individual internal audits carried out on Student Records for each faculty had received substantial assurance with no recommendations. The internal auditor's progress report noted that all audits during the year had received substantial assurance with a total of 7 merits attention recommendations over all reports, 6 of which had been accepted by management. Chris Mantel had highlighted a potential problem with the Local Government Pension Scheme in that the Fund's Actuaries required the financial statements auditors to sign a letter asking them to give right of title to paper-work and the College Secretary would be taking this up with Hampshire County Council. The College Secretary gave an update on recent progress being made between Tenon and the Actuaries. The Committee had considered the Risk Management Strategy and noted the biggest risks were those out of the control of College management, i.e. LSC and funding moving from the LSC to the local authority. It was pleasing to note that all areas within the College's control are categorised as low risk.

[Cllr Allgood declared his interest as a Director of the Local Government Pension Scheme].

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2008 were RECEIVED.

(ii) Risk Management Strategy – Annual Report from College Management
(Doc.C08/17 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary thanked Donna Kinnair for her overview (Minute 734 (i)).

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Risk Management Strategy – Annual Report from College Management was AGREED.

[Patricia Thompson left the meeting at 6.45 pm]

735. Finance and Employment Committee

(i) Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2008
(Doc.C08/18 was circulated on 26 June 2008)

Stephenie Linham noted the Principal's overview of the new funding methodology was a separate item on the Corporation agenda. There had been interesting debate about adult learning and the potential risks facing the College. The new build proposal had been discussed and the Committee had recommended that although the estimated cost is £2,500,000 that the Corporation be recommended to allow up to £3 million should this prove necessary, and the Principal be authorised to review and approve any budget forecasts required by the LSC.

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2008 were RECEIVED.

(ii) Revised Revenue and Capital Budgets 2007/2008
(Doc.C08/19 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal commended the important and invaluable work of the College Secretary in terms of accommodation and LSC capital project applications, and the Head of Finance on College finances and for being up to speed on funding changes. Rob Roberts, Assistant Principal (Quality in the Curriculum) was a very important colleague in respect of development and sustainability of the College.

Revised revenue and capital budgets were based on the outturn date of 31 July and the College remains in a very strong financial position. Members were referred to the LSC income £28.251m (Page 2) and the Principal had intentionally placed College provision in the centre of government priorities – 16-18 education and part-time 19+ to give absolute assurance of funding. Turnover was £32.5m with a paybill of over £23m. A significant sum, almost £1.3m, had been put into additional equipment which ranged from IT equipment, books, and the climbing wall. A 5% pay rise had been set aside for staff and there were no changes to staff conditions. The College continues to have no debt and cashflow (page 12) had not fallen below £4m.

The revised revenue and capital budgets for 2007/2008 were RECEIVED and the probable outturn was AGREED.

(iii) Overview of new LSC Funding Methodology

The Principal distributed a summary of the new funding methodology. He noted the split into the two government departments – Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for children up to the age of 19, and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) for post-19. The education budget had been split between the two departments with no virement between and, therefore, the College will have to meet a number of separate targets. Importantly, with effect from next year (1 August 2008) if the adult target is not met there will be a clawback in year with a tolerance of 3%.

The three funding streams were noted. (1) Learner Responsive - the Principal negotiates each year the LSC target 16-18, with no clawback. 19+ is a separate target and the significant difference is the in-year reconciliation and the need for the target to be met within 3% of threshold. (2) Employer Responsive - provision comprising apprenticeships, Train to Gain – representing an enormous movement from traditional funding with payment on actuals monthly in arrears. (3) Additional Learning Support – any student who needs support is entitled to ALS based on what ability of Maths and English students arrive with at the College - Initially 60/40 for 2008/09 and then to be negotiated locally 75/25.

The Principal outlined the standard learner number (SLN) target. 1SLN = 450 guided learning hours (GLH) with a cap at 1.75. Full-time students mostly have a programme of 450 GLH but many students have more (e.g. 787 hours or 4.25 AS/AS + entitlement). Funding is represented by 50% on course and 50% on success (success based on retention x achievement). The College is expected to charge adults tuition fees equivalent to 42.5% of costs in 2008/09, then to 50% of costs in 2010/11 and the LSC reduce this from the budget.

The College must hit the cash allocations and targets and significant issues were noted to be 19+ and part-time 16-19. The Principal distributed Learner Numbers and Funding and referred members to the 07/08 allocations - £20,617,000 for 16-18 based on 4708 full-time, 720 part-time; the 19+ target of £5m for 376 full-time; 6400 part-time; and ALS some £1.9m. Members were then referred to the probable outturn figures - £21,325m for 16-18, but the adult target figure (£4.1m) has been missed and the ALS target exceeded at just over £2.1m with a total funding of £27.621m. As of 1 August there will be separate targets and instead of £5m the College will have achieved £4.18m, representing a shortfall of £800,000. On adult targets, based on 3% threshold, the clawback is £650,000. The Principal was now looking to rectify these potentially serious financial consequences of not achieving future targets. In

respect of the separate part-time target of 720, the College currently anticipated an outturn figure of only 330.

The Principal emphasised the need for the College to get out into the community and into the business world and develop a variety of new provision, including apprenticeships for younger people. The College was holding an Open Day for the community on Saturday 5 July. The management structure was being reviewed in terms of the whole adult debate. The College remains in a strong position but must respond to the funding issues in a very proactive way. It was essential that governors be aware of these significant issues. In response to Philip Robinson, the Principal noted that from 2010 Hampshire County Council would take over responsibility 14-19 but not post-19.

The Principal's verbal report was RECEIVED.

- (iv) Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2008/2009
(Doc.C08/20 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal referred to the bottom paragraph (page 1) which noted the need to increase learner participation and accordingly fees had not increased by the full amount required to offset the reduction in funding. The government's priority areas were listed and virement was no longer possible. Page 2 detailed the assumptions in the budget. Pages 1-7 were discussed at the Finance and Employment Committee (23.06.08). Assumptions were based on a robust 12% increase in adult learner responsive provision and if the target is not achieved the College has sufficient reserves to pay the money back. Page 3 notes LSC income (£29.4m), expensed additional equipment (£600,000) and page 4 indicates the cashflow forecast.

The College is fully staffed for the new academic year with more high quality staff including excellent new appointments in Physics, Chemistry and Maths. There are rising application numbers in these subjects which is right against the trend. We have 125 physics applicants, 290 applicants for AS Maths and 120 for chemistry AS level. The College provides an excellent work environment and staff morale is high. The strength of the College is its staff. The North West Building is paid for by cashflow balances and the capital project assumption from the LSC is 10%.

On the proposal of the Chairman, the following were AGREED

- (1) Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2008/2009
 - (2) That although the estimated cost of the building programme is £2,500,000 that up to £3,000,000 be allowed should this prove necessary.
 - (3) That the Principal be authorised to review and approve any budget forecasts required by the LSC
- (v) Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
(Doc.C08/21 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary noted the revised Instrument and Articles set out the responsibility of the Corporation to ensure procedures are in place. The new procedures had been developed from existing procedures and updated by the College's solicitors to take account of statutory changes and case law. The two College Unions UCU and UNISON had been consulted and minor changes incorporated. The document was approved by the Finance and Employment Committee (23.06.08) and now requires the Corporation's endorsement.

On the recommendation of the Finance and Employment Committee (23.06.08) the Disciplinary Procedure, Procedure for Resolving Individual Grievances and Poor Performance (attached as Appendix 1 to Doc. C08/21) were AGREED.

736. Corporation Self-Assessment and Review of Training Needs
(Doc.C08/22 was circulated with the agenda)

The Clerk thanked members who had responded to the questionnaire which was based on FEFC scoring for comparative purposes. The best scored question was Question 6 – The Corporation is satisfied that sound financial procedures are in place and resources are used efficiently and effectively to maintain the College’s position of robust solvency, followed by Question 10 – Members are encouraged to participate in debate and discussion at Corporation meetings, and Question 4 – The Corporation actively supports and encourages the Principal in the execution of his considerable responsibilities, followed by Questions 3, 9 and 14. The least best scores were: Question 12 – The Corporation has established procedures for the selection of new members and for their subsequent induction; and Question 11 – The College periodically reviews the profile of its membership against that of the balance of the College community.

Specially identified features included ‘green’ issues, keeping students involved and informed about the role of student governor, and awareness of procedures. Training needs had been identified as - how to improve financial scrutiny; further clarification re diplomas; and the College would be taking these proposals forward. Members were invited to notify any ideas of modifications to questions for next year.

The analysis of the Corporation’s Self Assessment and training needs identified were RECEIVED.

737. Health and Safety Report 2006/2007
(Doc.C08/23 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary noted an important area of responsibility for governors related to health and safety. Many strategies are in place within the College to ensure the Corporation meets its statutory duties. The College has a Health and Safety Manager and colleagues include a newly-appointed risk assessor. The report covers the previous academic year and 219 accidents/incidents were recorded. To put that figure into context the total number of students and staff is some 12,000 and yet again represents a very low accident rate and enabled the College to apply and receive the British Safety Council Safety Award for the fifteenth successive year. The increase of 4.7% in the total number of accident/incidents reported compared with a 3.2% increase in full-time students. Every incident is investigated. The total number of hospital admissions was 19, mostly to do with sports and games, and a number of hand incidents in the catering area. There were no serious injuries to staff or students in this period. Gwen Blackett noted the minor accident and emergency department at St Mary’s Hospital offered excellent facilities and much reduced waiting times compared to Queen Alexandra Hospital. Richard Andrews noted that two of the incidents, relating to illness, were outside the control of the College.

The Health and Safety Report 2006-2007 was RECEIVED.

738. Dates of meetings for the next academic year
(Doc.C08/24 was circulated with the agenda)

The Clerk noted the new start times of 5.45 pm with the possible exception of the Search Committee which precedes another meeting.

The schedule of meetings for 2008/2009 was RECEIVED and the dates of Corporation meetings were CONFIRMED for Thursdays, at 5.45 pm, on:
13 November 2008, 11 December 2008, 19 March 2009, 9 July 2009

739. Any Other Business – Tony Welch noted the excellent content and layout of the College’s July/August Newsletter. The Principal noted that a new member of staff was responsible for its compilation.

[The meeting was declared closed at 7.40 pm]

(SG080708)