

THE SOUTH DOWNS COLLEGE CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 5.45 pm on Thursday 9 July 2009 in the Committee Room

Present: Andrew Turner (Chairman), Frederick Allgood, Gwen Blackett, Joshua Bulleyment, Yvonne Elliott, Stephenie Linham, Laxmi Neave, Michael Oakes (Principal), Philip Robinson, Patricia Thompson, Tony Welch

Apologies: Richard Andrews, Donna Munday, Scott Carless

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

776. Minutes (circulated with the agenda)

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13 May 2009 were AGREED whereupon the Chairman SIGNED the minutes.

777. Appointment of Vice-Chair

The Clerk noted Stephenie Linham's current term as Vice-Chair was due to expire on 6 October 2009 and she had confirmed a willingness to stand for a further term.

On the proposal of Gwen Blackett, seconded by Philip Robinson, the re-appointment of Stephenie Linham as Vice Chair of the Corporation for a period of two years until 6 October 2011, was unanimously AGREED.

The Chairman thanked Stephenie Linham for all her hard work.

778. Corporation Membership

The Clerk noted that terms of office in respect of Freddie Allgood and Gwen Blackett were shortly due to expire. Freddie Allgood had confirmed his willingness to stand for a further four years and Gwen Blackett had expressed her willingness to stand for a further two years.

On the proposal of Tony Welch, seconded by Patricia Thompson, it was unanimously AGREED that

- (i) Cllr Frederick Allgood be re-appointed as a member of the Corporation under Clause 2(1)(a) of the Instrument of Government for a period of four years with effect from 31 July 2009
- (ii) Gwen Blackett be re-appointed as a member of the Corporation under Clause 2(1)(a) of the Instrument of Government for a period of 2 years until 6 October 2011.

The Chairman thanked Freddie Allgood and Gwen Blackett for their valuable contributions.

779. Proposals for Revised Committee Structure (Doc. C09/12 was circulated with the agenda)

The Chairman referred to discussions at the March meeting to revise the Corporation structure with effect from the new academic year and thanked the College Secretary for turning the proposal so brilliantly into Doc.09/12 and appendices. He hoped members still remained so enthusiastic about the proposal. He particularly noted the consequences at paragraph 4 that there would be a net seven fewer meetings, governors will be better informed and there would be less duplication.

In response to Stephenie Linham, Andrew Turner advised he would not expect to chair all the meetings. It was proposed that finance-based meetings be chaired by Stephenie Linham and standards-based meetings be chaired by Andrew Turner and that the position be reviewed after one academic year.

Yvonne Elliott noted that currently members of the Audit Committee are not permitted to attend meetings of the Finance and Employment Committee and the Clerk confirmed that Audit Committee members would be permitted to attend all the Corporation meetings.

On the proposal of the Chairman it was unanimously AGREED:

- (i) That the Corporation disestablish the following committees with effect from 1 August 2009:
 - Finance and Employment
 - Standards and Quality
 - Premises
- (ii) That the Corporation meet normally on six occasions per year to consider the cycle of business as set out in Doc. C09/12 Appendix 1 (herewith).
- (iii) That for the year 2009/2010 the dates and times of Corporation and Committee Meetings be as set out in Doc. C09/12 Appendix 2 (herewith).

780. Committee Membership

The Clerk noted that the terms of office to committees of a number of members were shortly due to expire and members had expressed their willingness to stand for re-appointment.

On the proposal of Yvonne Elliott, seconded by Philip Robinson, it was AGREED unanimously that

- (i) Gwen Blackett be reappointed as a member of Search Committee, Staff Appeals Committee and as Chair of the Staff Appeals Committee for a period of 2 years until 6 October 2011.
- (ii) Donna Munday be reappointed as a member and chair of the Audit Committee, and member of the Remuneration Committee for a period of 2 years until 10 November 2011.
- (iii) Stephenie Linham be reappointed as a member of the Staff Appeals, Search and Remuneration Committees for a period of 2 years until 10 November 2011.
- (iv) Patricia Thompson be reappointed as a member of the Audit Committee for a period of 2 years until 13 November 2011.
- (v) Andrew Turner be reappointed as a member and Chair of the Remuneration Committee; member and Chair of the Search Committee; member of the Staff Appeals Committee, until 10 November 2011.

781. Academy in Havant

The Principal outlined the development of Academy schools nationally and specifically in the context of Hampshire where he noted that the county was in the penultimate round of bidding for over £1 billion of capital monies under the Building Schools for the Future initiative. In order to access these significant levels of funding, the County Council needed to address weaknesses in schools and resolve the issues regarding surplus school places.

Other than a school near Basingstoke (now closed), Staunton Park had been the consistently worst performing school in Hampshire and had surplus capacity. Members and senior

officers within Hampshire together with Havant's MP were united in an approach to resolve the issues at Staunton Park. South Downs College was known to Whitehall and he as Principal had been approached by the County Council to sponsor a new Community-based Academy. The Principal stressed that there would not be a financial cost to the College and the new school would not be named either Staunton or South Downs.

The Principal had met with the whole school staff and there was full support for the new Academy from both teaching and support staff at the school. A notice of closure for the existing Staunton Park school had now been posted with a view to the new Academy school opening in September 2010. The Principal had met with the school's leadership team and an experienced Head had been appointed for the interim period. The Principal anticipated that a new Head would be appointed by October to be in post by 1 April 2010.

Key issues were to increase the proportion of children gaining 5 or more GCSEs (including English and Maths) from the current 14% and to increase the number of children on roll (currently 500). The Principal was keen to see greater liaison with primary schools and greater involvement of adult learners in the area. The new Academy would be an English specialist school although he wanted all children to be proficient in English, Maths and ICT. Children and their parents needed to have greater aspirations and he was confident that the new Academy could achieve these aims.

The Chairman thanked the Principal for his update and his work in developing the Academy. Philip Robinson applauded the initiative and it was confirmed that the Principal anticipated being part of the interview panel for the Academy principal.

In response to questions, it was noted that 87% of parents had supported the proposals in recent consultation.

On the proposal of the Chairman, it was AGREED unanimously to support the proposals for a new Academy school at Staunton Park with South Downs College as the principal community sponsor.

782. Academic Board
(Doc.C09/13 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal noted the progress the Havant Consortium had made towards diploma delivery. To date some 70 pupils had applied to do the new diploma at age 14-16 in schools but there had been no interest in the post-16 diploma. However, if popular at 14-16 students may come to the College for the diploma post-16, i.e. September 2011 at the earliest. He noted that the Secretary of State, Ed Balls, had stated the diploma would be the preferred route to education, and it would be interesting to see future progress.

The LSC was being disbanded from 1 April 2010 and the local authority assumes responsibility for funding 16-19 and a separate agency for post-19. South Downs College remains in an extremely strong position.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2009 were RECEIVED.

783. Premises Committee
(Doc.C09/14 was circulated with the agenda)

Stephenie Linham noted an update on the progress of the North West Building II had been reported to the Finance and Employment Committee on 25 June.

The minutes of the Premises Committee held on 14 May 2009 were RECEIVED.

784. Standards and Quality Committee
(Doc.C09/15 was circulated with the agenda)

The Chairman noted the really interesting presentation from Rob Roberts (Minute 181) and the fascinating practical illustration of the way in which the curriculum is developed and he considered it was a shame not all governors had been involved. He wished to formally record his appreciation to Rob Roberts for his work to drive quality upwards and his exceptional service to the College and the Corporation.

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2009 were RECEIVED.

785. Audit Committee

(i) Minutes
(Doc.C09/16 was circulated with the agenda)

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2009 were RECEIVED. The College Secretary noted that a number of items reported are separate items on the Corporation agenda.

(ii) Risk Management Strategy – Annual Report from College Management

(a) Risk Management Policy
(Doc.C09/17 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary noted that the recent internal audit report on Risk Maturity recommended that the College document a Risk Management Policy to identify the role of the Audit Committee and the role of the Risk Management Group. The College Secretary and Yvonne Elliott had developed the proposed policy from LSC guidance and a policy from another FE College in order to formalise what is already in place, i.e. the underlying approach to risk management, the role of the Corporation, staff and Senior Management Team, how they adopt responsibilities and avoid/mitigate/transfer risk. The policy was brought to the Corporation on the recommendation of the Audit Committee.

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee (11.06.09) the Risk Management Policy (attached as Appendix 1 to Doc.C09/17) was AGREED.

(b) Risk Management Annual Report.
(Doc.C09/18 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary noted that the Risk Management Strategy Annual Report comprises a risk register which is reviewed by the Risk Management Group (Principal, College Secretary, Head of Finance, and Head of Information Services). He highlighted the significant risk on Page 12 in respect of external funding from the LSC/successor bodies and the ways in which the College mitigates the risks as identified on the second page of the report.

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee (11.06.09) the Risk Management Report (attached as Appendix A to Doc.C09/18) was AGREED.

In response to Philip Robinson the College Secretary advised that Swine Flu was contained in contingency planning and staff had recently been circulated with policies and procedures to be followed as advised by the Hampshire Health Protection Agency. In response to the Chairman, he noted that paragraphs on significant risks were contained in the annual financial statements and relevant reports.

- (iii) Strategy for Internal Audit - Update for 2009/2010
(Doc.C09/19 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary noted the report had been prepared in consultation with him and the Head of Finance. The strategy detailed risk based coverage page 4, Appendix A, and the audits to be covered for 2009/10. Appendix B detailed areas that had previously been covered and the Audit Committee had particularly requested that the date of last coverage be included in the report.

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee (11.06.09) the Strategy for Internal Audit for 2009/2010 was AGREED.

786. Finance and Employment Committee

- (i) Minutes
(Doc.C09/20 was circulated on with the agenda)

Stephenie Linham noted that budgets for the current and next academic year were separate items on the agenda. Members had congratulated the Principal and colleagues on being 0.7% above target on enrolments which has a significant impact on the budget. The North West Building II was progressing on target. The Principal confirmed that the College had now heard from the LSC that there would be no capital support funding. The Committee had endorsed the action undertaken to date on the new football facilities. Lastly members had echoed the comments made by the Standards and Quality Committee in respect of the contributions from Geoff Norman, Quality Manager, and Rob Roberts, Assistant Principal (Quality).

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2009 were RECEIVED.

- (ii) Revenue and Capital Budgets 2008/2009
(Doc.C09/21 was circulated on with the agenda)

The Principal noted the College was confident of the outturn for the current year which ends 31 July. College Revenues for the current year (page 2) included a significant sum set aside for equipment, 5% pay rise for staff, additional staff appointments, the North West Building and a surplus at the end of year. Turnover was some £34 million and the paybill just over £25 million. The College is in a strong position and we are confident we will end the year in surplus. The Head of Finance had worked diligently on finances.

Phillip Robinson commented on the encouraging position and Freddie Allgood considered it was remarkable to achieve so much in budget.

On the proposal of the Chairman the monitoring statements to 31 May 2009 were RECEIVED and the probable outturn 2008/09 was approved.

- (iii) Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2009/2010
(Doc.C09/22 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal introduced the capital budgets for the year commencing 1 August 2009 and highlighted key figures. The budget (page 3) was based on the completion of the North West Building II and the New Studio Café and the College planned an in-year surplus, to appoint additional staff for the growth we will have, £500,000 for extra equipment and a 2.3% pay rise for all staff. The College remains strong financially and in staffing. Less money had been put into extra equipment because the College will receive less money. Lower interest rates had meant a £150,000 reduction of income. Staff consider that the 2.3% pay raise is significant. At the end of the year the College remains in surplus still with no borrowing. 16-18 enrolments account for 80% of budget (5000 students plus 250 growth); adult responsive represents 5% reduction in funding

as the government expects students to fund themselves, although the College has not reduced fees as much as the government wanted. Enrolments to date look encouraging. The College was working towards Train to Gain but the government had now run out of funding.

On the proposal of the Chairman,

- (a) the revenue and capital budgets for 2009/2010 were AGREED unanimously and
- (b) it was further AGREED that the Principal be authorised to review and approve any budget forecasts required by the LSC.

787. Code of Conduct

(Doc.C09/23 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary reported that the Code had originally been looked at by the Corporation in 2000 and over time the appendices had become out of date. Appendix 1 (page 9) summarised the responsibilities of the Corporation under the Articles of Government; Appendix 2 (pages 11-19) was the Learning and Skills Council's latest Financial Memorandum 2006; and Appendix 3 the Statutory Powers of the Corporation under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 as amended by the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Education Act 2002 and the Further Education and Training Act 2007. The main text of the Code (pages 2-7) had changed very little.

On the proposal of the Chairman the updated Code of Conduct was AGREED unanimously.

788. Any Other Business

Stephenie Linham noted she would be away on business and not able to attend the Corporation Meetings on 12 November 2009 and 10 December 2009.

[The Meeting was declared closed at 7.17 pm]

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