

Minutes of Corporation meeting – Monday 21st May 2012 at 6:30pm

Present

Mr J F Bingham (JFB) (Chairman), Cllr C Barron (CB), Dr R J G Bloomer (RJGB), Mrs J Bolton (JB), Mr J F B Clark (JFBC), Mrs J Collier (JC), Mr D Fitzgerald (DF), Mrs W Meehan (WM), Dr J Stevens (JS), Mrs K Stevens (KS), Mr J C Wainwright (JCW), Dr P R Williams (RW)

In attendance

Mr T Dowling (TD), Mr M Patterson (MP), Mrs L Clark (LC) (Clerk)

		Actions
1	Apologies for absence Mrs R Hill (RS), Mr Z Nazir (ZN), Mr D Suter (DS) (ZN and DS, the Student Governors are currently in their AS-exam period).	
2	Declaration of interests No interests were declared in respect of agenda items; however, members reserved the right to declare an interest at any stage of the meeting.	
3	Minutes dated 29th March 2012 The minutes of the meeting held on 29th March 2012 were approved with no amendments.	
4	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1 Succession Planning (item 6.2.1 on 29th March) JFB explained that the Corporation needs to elect a new vice chair or re-elect JCW. In light of the current financial circumstances it is recommended that JCW is re-elected as Vice Chair until the situation is moved towards a resolution. JCW indicated his willingness to be re-elected and this was carried unanimously (The role of Chair is due for election / re-election in July 2012). LC has been asked by JFB to convene a 'Search Group' to identify potential new governors and to get them involved with the Corporation, whether that is as a member or an observer initially.</p> <p>4.2 Modification Order (item 10 on 29th March) JFB commented that at the Foundation Fund AGM the Modification Order had been discussed. The Trust will be responsible for approving changes to the I&A although this will not constrain us.</p> <p>4.3 Further discussions regarding General Studies (item 6.4.3 on 29th March) RW outlined a proposal which he had already presented to the Resources committee on 9th May. This has not yet been discussed by the Quality and Standards committee as the next meeting is not scheduled until 2nd July. The proposal is to continue with General Studies in a manner similar to that trialled by Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Darlington. Under this proposal all first year L6 students would take GCSE General Studies delivered via tutorial in the lower sixth year; this would alleviate extra staffing costs. As it is a GCSE course a grade 'G' would be recorded as a success (TRC would of course be aiming to achieve at least C grades) and it removes General Studies from Level</p>	LC

	<p>3 success rates, and into Level 2. For the second year of their level 3 studies, students would have the option of completing an AS and A-Level, or not continuing with GS, but they would still have an additional GCSE at level 2. This would allow those students who rely on the additional points from achieving a level 3 qualification in General Studies for their university application to continue with its study. From the college's perspective this also results in; reduced exam costs, no lectures required in lower sixth, more funding for providing a GCSE course.</p> <p>DF queried whether it was a good idea to offer upper 6th the opportunity to complete both an AS and A level in the subject in one year. RW replied that until recently that is the way the college had run the course anyway. DF also commented that there will need to be safeguards in place as to who can continue with the level 3 qualifications. This was accepted and the Q&S committee were requested to further investigate this at their next meeting.</p> <p>Members noted all other action points had been resolved or were agenda items at this meeting.</p>	
5	Committee Reports	
5.1	Resources (09/05/12) – items for full Corporation LC distributed copies of the draft minutes from the recent Resources meeting	
5.1.1	<p>New projects and updates on approved ongoing projects</p> <p>1. New Minibus MP summarised the key points from the paper distributed prior to the meeting. JFB explained that at the recent Resources committee meeting this item had been discussed in full. The main requirement is for a 24 seater bus for the Rotherham Rugby Academy which is to be run from TRC in partnership with Rotherham Titans Rugby Club. The committee had noted that renting was a more expensive option over a 12 year period, using an NPV analysis than purchasing but that in this instance, and at this time, renting was agreed as the sensible way forward but would be kept under at least annual review.</p> <p>2. External Lighting MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting, which again had been discussed in detail at the recent Resources committee meeting. As agreed previously three security floodlights are due to be installed to test them. Also, two lights for the all-weather pitches are on order with a view that the company supplies the lights, we pay to install and if they work as hoped, then the college will pay for more. The pay-back should be less than four years.</p> <p>The Corporation noted the paper as presented approved the hiring of a 24 seater minibus.</p>	
5.1.2	Management Accounts April 2012 (inc departmental accounts) MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and summarised key points; The surplus shown under 'funding body grants' is a timing issue; at the recent Resources committee meeting the committee had asked that 'restructuring' costs are shown on a different line so as to not skew the figures,	

	<p>particularly as a KPI of the college is the salary costs ratio; the overspend on 'general maintenance' had been caused by lead thefts, leaks, broken down boilers, corroded pipes, asbestos, excess rain. With regards to the lead thefts, this is still an ongoing problem as the thieves are targeting the college approximately once a month, and the costs of having security all night is not worthwhile; Other areas including catering and sports are still doing very well.</p> <p>The Corporation approved the April 2012 Management Accounts and the departmental accounts as presented.</p>	
5.1.3	<p>H&S Action Plan 2011/ 12 and UMAL Report (including accident report)</p> <p>MP referred to the papers distributed prior to the meeting. There were no key issues to highlight and all outstanding issues had been dealt with, apart from the fact that the missing rail still needed to be inspected by JFB and JCW.</p> <p>The Corporation noted the paper as presented.</p>	JFB and JCW
5.2	<p>Audit Arrangements</p> <p>JFB commented that there had been no other committee meetings, however, the EFA has issued a consultation report regarding Audit arrangements which the Corporation needs to be aware of and therefore asked MP to update members.</p> <p>MP explained that currently colleges need to appoint internal auditors and financial statement auditors from separate organisations. There is no requirement on schools to undertake internal audit. There are ongoing discussions regarding the financial memorandum and the FMCE, and that under the new regime it may not be necessary to have separate organisations undertaking internal and external audit. There may also be the opportunity to remove internal audit completely, but at the recent Resources committee meeting members had agreed that whilst it would be reckless to remove internal audit it may be a good time to review the areas covered and the amount of days involved.</p> <p>The recommendation is (if the EFA approve the changes) to go to tender with our current external and internal auditors and use the same firm for both internal and external audit, and so decrease the number of days on internal audit whilst at the same time making it more applicable.</p>	
6	<p>Ofsted Inspection judgements – comparisons between schools, Sixth Form Colleges and GFE colleges</p> <p>RW referred to the papers distributed prior to the meeting for Corporation members' attention regarding recent national research and data analysis undertaken by Nick Allen. The papers highlight the inequalities in inspection judgments, caused by the use of different benchmarks for schools, general FE colleges and sixth form colleges. However, data analysis looking at intake of students shows that there are not huge differences.</p> <p>Ofsted grading is being very tightly linked with success rates, but this is not the case in schools where success rates have not been such a major focus previously.</p>	

	<p>It is very likely that the college will be inspected during the next academic year.</p> <p>The Corporation noted the papers as presented.</p>	
7	<p>Strategy Review</p> <p>There was nothing further to report on this.</p>	
8	<p>Code of Governance</p> <p>JFB explained that the SFCF had decided not to endorse the Code, but that as the college had already agreed to accept and in the view that it is good governance practice, members agreed that our acceptance stands.</p> <p>LC distributed a draft version of page 1 of the document which will be completed and presented to the next Governance committee. Members were happy with the format.</p> <p>RJGB queried whether the college is currently meeting 1.1 as the strategy review has not progressed fully recently. RW stated that the college's current 5 year plan comes to end at the end of the academic year and it would be logical to use an early meeting in the year to put the building blocks in place.</p> <p>JCW also explained that due to the financial situation caused by changes in student figures and the discussions with colleges in Rotherham, the strategy review has not been the main focus, but that some conclusions should be made in the very near future and formalised in the minutes. JCW and RW to work on this.</p>	<p>LC</p> <p>JCW and RW</p>
9	<p>Foundation Issues</p> <p>JFB and JFBC explained to members that discussions are currently ongoing regarding whether the Foundation Fund should continue to sit within the college accounts or be moved to the Feoffees, to ensure it is in the best place. This will be investigated further by the Foundation Fund committee and brought back to the Corporation at the summer or autumn meeting.</p> <p>JFB also commented that this year (possibly extending to future years) there is an additional scholarship which has been donated by the RGSOBA for £1000 for a student taking a university course in Medicine, Veterinary Medicine or Biological Sciences.</p>	
10	<p>Any other business</p> <p>10.1 Skills Audit</p> <p>LC explained the background to the Skills Audit and handed out guidance notes and skills audit forms to members. The Governance committee have reviewed the format and grading scores and have approved a new skills audit. The auditors suggested this should be updated on an ongoing basis. LC asked for completed forms to be returned by 8th June.</p> <p>10.2 Equality and Diversity Training</p> <p>TD commented that there will be a staff training day on 13th July following the changes in the 2010 Act. At the last Corporation meeting RW had distributed papers on this subject. There will also be a session on underachievement in boys. TD invited all governors to attend. LC to email details.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>LC</p>

	10.3 AoC Governor Induction Event LC has emailed governors regarding an induction / refresher event on 23 rd June at High Melton, Doncaster and requested members to let her know if they wish to attend.	
11	Date of next meeting Monday 9 th July.	
12	Confidential Items (see Confidential agenda) <i>The detailed minutes and supporting papers are available from the Clerk to the Corporation.</i>	

Signed.....*J F Bingham*.....

Date.....*16th July 2012*.....

ACTIONS – Corporation meeting – Monday 21st May at 6:30pm

Item	Action to be taken	By whom	By when
4.1	Convene a Search Group	LC	ongoing
5.1.3	Investigate missing safety rail	JFB, JCW	asap
8	Code of Governance – review Strategy Review – Update	LC JCW and RW	GOV cttee mtg ongoing
10.1	Skills Audit – return completed forms	ALL	By 8 th June
10.2	Invite to Equality and Diversity Training – details to be emailed	LC	asap