

MINUTES OF TRC CORPORATION MEETING - MONDAY 16TH JULY 2012 AT 6.30PM

PRESENT:

Mr J F Bingham (JFB) (Chairman); Cllr C Barron (CB); Dr R J G Bloomer (RJGB); Mr J F B Clark (JFBC); Mrs J Collier (JC); Mr D Fitzgerald (DF); Mrs R Hill (RH); Dr A Khan (AK); Mrs W Meehan (WM); Mr Z Nazir (ZN); Mrs J Powell (JP); Dr J Stevens (JS); Mr J C Wainwright (JCW); Dr P R Williams (RW).

In Attendance:

Mr T Dowling (TD); Mr M Patterson (MP); Mr N Candy (NC) (Acting Clerk)

JFB welcomed NC who had been appointed recently to cover during the Clerk's (Laura Clark) maternity leave.

Action

1 Apologies for absence:

Mrs J Bolton (JB); Mr D Suter (DS); Mrs K Stevens (KS); Mrs L Clark (LC).

(Meeting quorate)

Members noted later in the meeting that KS had resigned from the Corporation wef 16th July 2012.

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 21st May 2012

JFB commented that the confidential minutes still should be regarded as confidential to the Board as a whole.

Both sets of minutes in respect of this meeting were approved with no amendment.

4 Matters arising (not covered by agenda items)

p1 Min 4.3 – RW updated members on the current position regarding the provision of General Studies – the benefits of such provision will be reviewed when the new funding methodology has been finalised.

p3 Min 5.1.3 – JFB confirmed that he and JCW had inspected the missing safety rail. MP and DB [Site Manager] had been asked to resolve this issue by, as a minimum, replacing the missing element.

[Post meeting note – this issue will be resolved during the summer].

5 Committee Reports

5.1 Audit (02/07/12) – items for full Corporation

JC provided a verbal report on issues discussed at the recent Audit Committee meeting.

The key items were as follows:

5.1.1 EFA National Audit Changes – consultation response

JC referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting. RW commented that 90% of respondents had been in favour of the 5 proposals detailed in the paper. Members agreed that it is important to ensure that auditing systems are effective, even if internal audit is reduced. MP commented that the aim is to remove crossover between two separate companies, thereby reducing costs, whilst still retaining control of auditing processes. The intention is to invite tenders from the current firms undertaking internal and external audits – this issue will be considered in detail by the Audit committee in the autumn. JFB stressed the need to continue with internal auditing, but with more specific targeting and hopefully reduced costs.

5.1.2 Risk Management Action Plan 2012 / 13

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting. Specific issues discussed included the removal of reference to General Studies, more information in respect of item 10.5 [removal of AST posts – DF commented that more detail should be provided in the report to show how the risk is being mitigated], the inclusion of SMT as Manager responsible in item 3.3. JC commented that risk management is a rolling situation as risk issues are considered by a Risk Management Group before going to the Audit Committee and then to the full Corporation as appropriate. Job titles on page 1 need updating.

The Corporation approved the Risk Management Action Plan 2012/13 subject to the amendments detailed above.

5.1.3 Apprenticeships Report

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and explained the background to it. The intention was to provide proper jobs and proper training as detailed in the paper. JCW commented that the outcomes of the exercise should be provided and reviewed in one / two years time in order to ascertain the effectiveness of the project.

The Corporation noted the paper as presented.

5.2 Quality & Standards (02/07/12) – items for full Corporation

DF provided a verbal report on issues discussed at the recent Quality & Standards Committee meeting. The key items were as follows:

5.2.1 Progress with underperforming departments

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and explained that the modelled success rate is based on retention and predicted success rates. Apart from Law, the other results should be satisfactory for this year. No significant issues were raised.

5.2.2 Report on Lesson Observations

DF referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and commented on sentence at the foot of page 1 which referred to 'the scope to differentiate teaching better'. There was considerable discussion amongst members as to the meaning of that phrase. JC commented that in her view the overall tone of the report was one of negativity. RW replied that whilst it was disappointing, the report highlighted issues to build on. JFBC remarked that the report seemed full of generalisations and asked if follow up discussions had taken place with the author of the report. RW replied that detailed feedback had been given to provide 'flesh on the bones'. RJGB asked why the paper had not been provided for consideration at the recent Q&S Committee meeting; RW explained timing issues and apologised and agreed to provide an update at the next Q&S Committee meeting.

RW

5.2.3 Operational Plans (i) 2011/12 (ii) 2012/ 13

(i) RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and discussed specific aspects of it. No significant issues were raised.

The Corporation noted the paper as presented.

(ii) RW provided background on the paper distributed prior to the meeting, commenting that it still had to be finalised at the start of the next academic year. An updated version will be presented for consideration at the next Q&S Committee meeting. JFB queried whether information was obtained from teachers references on their previous teaching ability was taken into account when new teachers were appointed; RW explained the appointment process including observation exercises and the involvement of students. Information about results was also obtained from prospective teachers.

RW

5.2.4 Retention (i) Data (ii) Targets

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting, commenting retention rates had been strong this year when compared to recent years. No significant issues were raised.

The Corporation noted the paper as presented.

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting, commenting that, in his view, the retention targets for 2012/13 were realistic. It was noted that the heading should be 2012-13, not 2010-11 as shown. No issues were raised.

The Corporation approved the Retention targets 2012-13 as presented.

5.2.5 Equality and Diversity Report

TD referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and commented that the training day held on July 10th had been well received by a variety of attendees including support staff, catering staff and cleaners. Good progress had been, and continues to be made throughout the year in this area.

The Corporation noted the paper as presented.

5.2.6 Learner Voice

TD commented on the end of the year surveys which had been recently undertaken. There was an inconsistency in completion however which needed to be addressed. Barriers to completion need to be investigated. AK distributed an example of the forms for surveys used at Sheffield Hallam University [hard copy] which could provide instant feedback and are not computer based. There was discussion around the practicalities of both approaches.

5.2.7 Ofsted inspections

RW provided a verbal update on the new Common Inspection Framework due to start in September 2012. He commented that the master judgement will be based upon national averages rather than SFC averages and that value added results will still be important. JFB stressed the need for all governors to be 'on top of teaching and learning'. There will be very short notice given before an inspection [Thursday for the following Monday]. Pilots appear to have been encouraging with regard to the short notice aspect. Inspectors will

review the college Self Assessment Report [SAR] prior to any inspection.

5.3 Foundation Fund (09/07/12) – items for full Corporation

Members noted that, whilst applications had been received for the Bridges and Feoffees awards this year, none had been received for the RGSOBA award [Medical, Veterinary or Biological Sciences] possibly due to the late notification of the award from the OBA and subsequent short notice given to students. It was agreed not to award this scholarship this year but leave it until next year when more notice will be given. JFB commented that the location of the Foundation Fund had still to be resolved.

5.4 Governance (09/07/12) – items for full Corporation

5.4.1 Succession Planning 2011/12 – 2015/16 – Potential Vacancies and filling them

JFB confirmed that a new group had been established – the Search Group (sub group of the Governance Committee) – to identify potential governors. JFBC asked all governors if they might be able to provide one or more names of potential governors to the Clerk for appropriate contact to be made. JS stressed the word ‘potential’ ie not immediate; the intention is to build up a bank of potential governors who can be considered for vacancies when they arise.

ALL

JFB reported KS’s resignation as a Feoffee nomination at this stage.

5.4.2 AoC Governance Briefing

Distributed for information.

5.4.3 Code of Governance – Comparison of Code with how we currently operate

JFB referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting which illustrated how TRC Corporation complies with the new Code of Governance. A statement will be included in the Financial Statements in future so that colleges can confirm compliance as appropriate.

5.5. Resources (09/07/12) – items for full Corporation

5.5.1 Accommodation Projects Update

JFB updated members on the projects detailed in the paper distributed prior to the meeting, which had been discussed in detail at the recent Resources Committee meeting. MP had been instructed to proceed with the roof repairs as detailed in the paper. Consultants will be approached next year in respect of the IT Network Upgrades. No significant issues were raised.

The Corporation noted the paper as presented.

5.5.2 Management Accounts June 2012 (incl departmental accounts)

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting, which had been discussed in detail at the recent Resources Committee meeting. He commented on specific issues including Funding Body Grants which are based on the tax year [£85,000 could be taken off the college although the new funding methodology could fill the gap]. In response to a query from JFBC about tax implications on the Catering Department, he replied that there were none as the vending machines are located within the Catering Department. No significant issues were raised.

The Corporation approved the Management Accounts June 2012 as presented.

5.5.3 Financial Plans 2012/13 – 2014/15

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting, which had been discussed in considerable detail at the recent Resources Committee. He referred to specific items including a reduced deficit amount for next year [p8] which had been achieved through savings identified by college management – a point on which JFB felt that they should be congratulated. MP also discussed the uncertainties of the new funding methodology which made financial forecasting extremely difficult. He commented that applications for 2012/13 were encouraging although conversion rates were difficult to ascertain with confidence. He covered the basis of pay rise projection [p13], commenting on cleaners wages in particular. JFB referred to a letter recently received which had agreed with the college's self assessment of outstanding in respect of the financial health check for 2010/11. No significant issues were raised.

The Corporation approved the Financial Plans 2012/13 – 2014/15 as presented.

5.5.4 Pensions Policy

MP provided background on the paper distributed prior to the meeting. There had always been a pensions statement which has now been incorporated into a policy document. He was asked to include reference to the South Yorkshire Pension Fund as part of the LPGS.

MP

The Corporation approved the Pensions Policy, subject to the amendment detailed above.

5.5.5 Fees Policy and 2012/13 Fees

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and commented on section 13 in particular which referred to the need for CRB checks for students on selected work experience.

The Corporation approved the Fees Policy paper as presented.

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting. In response to a question from JC regarding credit card fees, he replied that they only apply on large amounts ie >£50. No other issues were raised.

The Corporation approved the 2012/13 Fees paper as presented.

5.5.6 Agreement with Winterhill School

JFB referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and stressed that it should be treated as confidential within the Board as a whole. MP provided background information on the project and commented that there was still some work to do to finalise the document.

The Corporation approved the paper subject to a final version and delegated authority to the Chairman [JFB] and the Vice Chairman [JCW] to progress the matter accordingly.

5.5.7 Bank Facilities Letter Approval

MP referred to correspondence received from the college's bank seeking approval in respect of the BACS method of payment. JFB had amended the letter to refer to colleges rather than schools.

The Corporation approved the letter to be signed by the Chairman [JFB].

5.5.8 H&S Action Plan 2011/12 and UMAL Report

This item had been discussed in detail at the recent Resources Committee meeting [09/07/12]; no issues had been raised.

5.5.9 Safeguarding and Child Protection (i) Policy (ii) 2011/12 Report

RW referred to the policy distributed prior to the meeting, and to the amendments which had been discussed at the recent Resources Committee meeting [09/07/12] including earlier reference to the role of JS as 'governor champion' in this area, details of staff support through the process and the inclusion of fuller definitions of abuse on p7.

The Corporation approved the policy subject to the amendments detailed above.

RW referred to the report distributed prior to the meeting, and thanked Susanne Scotter for her work in this area. He commented that e-safeguarding was becoming more relevant, and that students had been very positive. JS was thanked for his work as 'governor champion'. JFB queried if forced marriages was an issue; RW replied that there had not been any significant issues about that item raised this year although it was relevant to safeguarding.

The Corporation noted the report as presented.

5.5.10 SPH Grievance Procedure

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and to the amendments highlighted on p6 in particular. No issues were raised.

The Corporation approved the paper as presented.

5.5.11 Whistleblowing Policy

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting. No issues were raised.

The Corporation approved the paper as presented.

5.5.12 Caretaker's House (additional item)

MP tabled a paper at the meeting which detailed the options in respect of letting or selling the property. The paper generated considerable discussion around a number of issues arising from it including CRB checks on potential tenants [RJGB], applicants being vetted by the college [RW], the provision of legal advice and reputational aspects [JS], termination considerations [JFBC], need to maintain value of asset [JFB]. A vote was taken in which the proposal to let the house on a residential commercial basis was defeated by a significant majority of governors. MP was asked to submit alternative scenarios for consideration at the next Corporation meeting including the possible letting to a member of staff. The college has no use for it so in the meantime the house will remain empty although it will need to be maintained in good order given the valuable asset that it is.

MP

6 5 year Strategic Plan

(WM and AK left the meeting during this item)

RW provided a verbal update of the plan and agreed to provide a full commentary for consideration at the next Corporation meeting. There was some discussion around a proposal to change the target to 'outstanding'. The experiences of other colleges were discussed. JCW referred to a paper tabled the meeting which referred to success rates and student expenditure. NC was asked to attach an updated version to these minutes.

RW

NC

7 Mission Statement – Annual Review

No significant issues were raised.

The Corporation approved the Mission Statement as presented.

8 Corporation Committees – proposed meeting dates 2012/13

Members noted the schedule of meeting dates as presented with one amendment – the autumn term dates are in respect of 2012 – not 2013 as shown in the schedule.

9 Foundation issues

None raised

10 Corporation Committee Annual Assessment

JFB referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and asked all members to complete and return to NC asap. He also asked NC to issue the Chairman Appraisal form to all members for completion and return to NC asap.

ALL
NC
ALL

11 Any other business

11.1 Sheffield Half Marathon - CB reported that he had successfully completed the recent Sheffield Half Marathon run and thanked members for their financial support.

11.2 Collaboration update

JFB updated members on a recent meeting at which heads of agreement had been signed. These were available from him for members to look at. He also referred to a future meeting with representatives of other colleges involved in this exercise which both he and JCW will attend; RW was also due to attend a meeting with the other colleges in the near future. JFB confirmed that he had recently briefed TRC staff on the current position. A copy of the paper sent to all staff will also be included with these minutes for all governors.

NC

12 Date of next meeting

Monday 17th September 2012 (6.30pm) – Special Corporation meeting

JFB thanked all members for their support during 2011/12 and wished everybody a relaxing summer break.

13 Confidential item.

Staff and student members were asked to leave the meeting for consideration of this item. The detailed minute and supporting papers are available from the Clerk to the Corporation.

Signed*J F Bingham*.....

Date*22nd October 2012*.....

ACTIONS – Corporation meeting – Monday 16th July 2012 [6.30pm]

Minute	Action to be taken	By Whom	By When
5.2.3 (ii)	Provide updated 2012 /13 Operational Plan	RW	Next Q&S mtg
5.4.1	Provide names of potential governors to Clerk	All	Ongoing
5.5.12	Provide alternative scenarios re caretaker's house	MP	Next Corp mtg
6	5 year strategic plan – provide full commentary	RW	Next Corp mtg
	Attach updated performance figures to these minutes	NC	Immediate
10	Return Corp Cttee appraisal form to Clerk	All	ASAP
	Issue Chair appraisal form to governors	NC	Immediate
	Return completed Chair appraisal form to Clerk	All	ASAP