

New College Telford

Minutes of New College Corporation

Tuesday 11 March 2008

Present: Dr R Hargreaves (Chairman)
Mr V Davies
Mr J Dwane
Mrs J Millington
Mr G Clark (Part)
Cllr I Fletcher
Dr S Ali
Mr D Hopkins
Mr J Shaw
Mr A Pickerin
Mr S Walton

In Attendance: Mr B Doyle (Part) (Tribal)
Mrs B Tyley (Part)
Ms A Rosser (Part)
Mr P Taylor (Clerk)

1 Apologies

Mr Crowson, Mr Woulds, Mr Boulter, Mr Dean.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Walton and Ms Rosser to the Corporation meeting.

2 Confirmation of Minutes

The open minutes of the Corporation meeting of 11 December 2007 were confirmed.

3 Declarations of Interest

In respect of the report from Tribal Property Services on college accommodation within the agenda item 7 (Finance and General Purposes Committee Matters), Cllr Fletcher declared an interest as a member of Telford & Wrekin Council and Chair of the Plans Board which determines planning applications with the Borough. Cllr Fletcher reported that this potential conflict of interest would prevent him voting on a resolution of the Corporation that would result in a planning application to the Council. The Clerk advised that no substantive proposals on accommodation were included in the agenda item, and no formal determinations which could require Corporation members' voting were involved.

4 Corporation Matters

The Corporation resolved to welcome and appoint Mr Walton to the Corporation as parent member.

7 Finance and General Purposes Committee (Part)

At this point in proceedings the Chairman, with the assent of the Corporation, determined that Appendix 3 to the report 03.08 should be dealt with in advance of other items on the agenda.

[Clerk's note: Appendix 3 to report 03.08, the interim report from Tribal Property Services was, in accordance with the Corporation's confidentiality policy, considered in closed session and a separate record of proceedings made to be held in the confidential minute book].

5 Principal's Report

Mr Clark introduced the report (copy in minute book) for the Corporation, explaining that it provided an overview of the changes in further education, including the impact of new government departments within the local context of Telford and Wrekin. The report also covered leadership and management and support for students.

Mr Clark highlighted for the members the major changes in the government's departmental structure for education, and the significance of the changes for the sponsorship and funding of further education. He referred to changes in the FE sector and indicated that important pronouncements from the government on the future for sixth form colleges were anticipated shortly. He drew the Corporation's attention to changes in the schools sector and referred to the local developments in Telford.

[Clerk's note: at this point in proceedings, Cllr Fletcher declared an interest as a governor of Adams Grammar, Newport, a co-sponsor of the Abraham Darby Academy].

Turning to Leadership and Management, Mr Clark summarised the major multiple changes that are affecting the context of the college's operation and the challenges faced by college leaders. He described the efforts made to strengthen the college's Senior Leadership Group and the developing role of key curriculum area leaders.

Ms Rosser introduced the section of the report on supporting effective learning and achievement, and described recent developments and improvements in the college's support and guidance for students. She reviewed the ways in which Student Services had developed a more proactive approach to 'Every Child Matters' themes and outcomes.

She described the revised processes for monitoring student achievement including the negotiation of individual student targets, and the new systems for monitoring student progress. She drew members' attention to the improved responsiveness where students are at risk of not achieving target grades. Ms Rosser referred to the positive student comments on 'Improving own Learning and Performance' activities.

She also noted the work undertaken by Student Services and personal tutors to improve support and guidance for students planning for progression after New College.

Mr Clark commended the work of Ms Rosser, colleagues in Student Services and personal tutors, and noted in particular the growth in the number of students where multiple agencies are involved. The Chairman and others paid warm tribute to the work undertaken in the college to support students.

In debate, in response to a question from Mr Dean on the potential growth in the number of sixth forms in the area, Mr Clark highlighted some of the major developments associated with 'Campus Telford', the 'Building Schools for the Future' and the planned academies in south Telford. He commented that rather than the wholesale growth in new sixth forms, he anticipated an expansion in the number of students undertaking some post 16 study at school, and cited collaborative approaches being developed between New College and schools in the area. He anticipated that the college would be engaged increasingly in supporting students in more distributed and networked forms of learning, with a growth in 'off campus' student numbers.

The Corporation resolved to receive the report.

6 Corporation Matters: New Instrument and Articles of Government

The Clerk introduced the report (copy in minute book) for the Corporation and distributed copies of the New Instrument and Articles of Government and the DIUS Summary of Changes which constituted the appendices to the report.

He summarised the major changes arising from the New Instrument and Articles of Government and drew members' attention to the changes in membership requirements. He noted in particular that the changes in membership categories had served to frustrate the Corporation's previous intention to seek a nomination for a vacant 'Local Authority' member vacancy since such a category no longer existed in the new formulation on Corporation membership. He reviewed the recommended proposals on: Corporation membership; Corporation duties for Mission Review and Quality Strategy Approval; website publication requirements; and procedures for handling certain employment matters. In debate the Clerk confirmed that for the purposes of appointment, members other than the Principal and staff, student and parent members would now need to be treated as co-opted members had been previously, and could not be appointed by the Corporation without first consulting the Search Committee on the individual appointment and considering the Committee's advice. The Corporation resolved as follows:

- 1 The total membership of the Corporation shall be increased to 19, with the addition of another student member and the amalgamation of the previous categories of business, co-opted, local authority and local body under the title of 'general members'. The quorum would remain at 8 members. The revised membership is:

Proposed Membership

General	12
Principal	1
Parent	2
Staff	2
Student	2
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Total	19

- 2 Through the current student member, the student body shall be invited to nominate an additional student member as soon as practicable.
- 3 No change is needed to accommodate the new requirements in relation to mission review and quality strategy approval.
- 4 Arrangements shall be made as soon as practicable for the document 'Corporation Procedures, Committee Membership and Terms of Reference' to be published on the college website.

- 5 Arrangements shall be made as soon as practicable for the confirmed open minutes of each meeting of the Corporation and its Committees to be published on the college website as soon as possible following the confirmation of those minutes.
- 6 The new requirements of the Instrument and Articles of Government in relation to employment matters shall be included in the current review of Human Resources procedures being overseen by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, and that the Finance & General Purposes Committee is charged with bringing forward to the Corporation for approval any resultant revisions to such procedures.

7 Finance & General Purposed Committee Matters (Part)

Mr Hopkins, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, introduced the report (copy in minute book) for the Corporation explaining that it covered matters discussed by the Committee at its meeting of 18 February 2008. He drew the Corporation's attention to the management reports for the period to 31 January 2008, noting that the improving position had largely resulted from under spending on the staffing budget arising principally from unfilled posts. Turning to the mid year update for 2007/08 he summarised the income and expenditure figures set out in the report. He drew members' attention to two items in the report, namely: the full time student number target being exceeded by 50 learners and the resultant under funding; and the impact of the reductions in pay expenditure and the fall in the pay as a proportion of income to some 74%, now below the maximum target figure of 75% set by the Corporation.

The Corporation resolved to receive the report and:

- 1 Receive the management reports for the period to 31 January 2008.
- 2 Approve the mid year update 2007/08.

8 Audit Committee Matters

The Corporation noted that there were no Audit Committee matters to report.

9 Student Achievement and Standards Committee Matters

Mr Pickerin, Chairman of the Student Achievement & Standards Committee, introduced the report (copy in minute book) for the Corporation, explaining that it summarised matters considered by the Committee at its meeting of 25 February 2008.

On the Annual Quality Report 2007, Mr Pickerin paid tribute to the work staff involved in its review and completion. He drew member's attention to: improvement in success rates in curriculum areas (page 29 in the report);

developments in supporting students under the five Every Child Matters framework headings (pages 34-45 in the report); and the overall trend of improvement in success rates at most levels in the college since 2003 (page 51 in the report).

Turning to external review he summarised the outcomes of the Ofsted monitoring visit of 21 January 2008 and the conclusion of 'reasonable progress' in five of the six reporting areas, and 'insufficient progress' in respect of actions to improve students' progress and to increase the level of challenge. In a short debate following a question from Mr Davies on the nature of the 'challenge' referred to, Mr Clark and Mrs Tyley commented that the report referred to both the need to set challenging targets for individual students with closer monitoring of progress, and to ensuring that lessons challenge students to achieve their full potential with prompt tackling of underperformance.

Mr Pickerin summarised the main considerations of the Committee on the matters of the Quality Improvement Plan 2007/08 update and Areas of Concern.

The Committee resolved to:

- 1 Receive the Annual Quality Report 2007 and
- 2 Receive the Committee's Report.

[Clerk's note: for the convenience of members, the Chairman determined that item 11 should be considered in advance of item 10].

11 Date of Next Meeting

The Corporation noted the dates of future meetings of the Corporation.

[Clerk's note: at this point in the proceedings, Mr Clark, Mrs Tyley and Ms Rosser left the meeting].

10 Senior Staff Salaries

[Clerk's note: in accordance with the Corporation's policy on confidentiality and the requirements of the Instrument and Articles of Government, this item was dealt with in confidential session and a separate record of proceedings made].