

<p>The College of West Anglia Minutes of Corporation Meeting 10 December 2008, Boardroom, King's Lynn Campus 10.00 am</p>
--

Present	Peter Dixon	Chair
	Roger Almond	Di Atkinson
	Jack Bantoft	Chris Barnes
	Andrew Cave	Paul Cotton
	Cheri Crosley	Yvette Pratt
	Derek Stringer	Roger Ward
	Sandy Willatt	
	David Pomfret	Principal
Attending	Richard Williamson	Executive Director of Finance and College Services (part)
	Gordon Gillespie	Director of Capital/Educational Developments (part)
	Hilary Reid	Clerk to the Corporation

The meeting was preceded by a presentation of the findings from the Socio-economic Impact Study for The College of West Anglia, led by the Principal.

1 Apologies

Kate Atherton, Sharon Cambridge, David Steele, Will Trattle.

2 Minutes of the previous Meeting – 22 October 2008

The Minutes of the meeting of 22 October 2008 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3 Matters Arising

(i) Page 3 item 3 Celebrating Success

AoC Beacon awards: The College had not won in either of the two categories entered but had been highly commended for the "Teaching of Maths" submission.

QIA Star awards: The Programme Manager for Animal Care had not been successful in the regional finals. The Board wished to record its recognition of the achievements by staff in both areas.

(ii) Page 3 item 8 SMT Re-structure Proposals

The re-structuring of the Senior Management Team had been implemented from 1 December 2008.

(iii) Page 2 item 7 Academy Developments

This report was deemed to be "Confidential".

Gordon Gillespie joined the meeting at 10.15 am.

4 Reports from Students' Union

In the absence of the Student Governor, there was no report.

The Clerk highlighted that a Student Governor from the Norfolk sites had not yet been identified. Principal and Clerk would follow-up.

Richard Williamson joined the meeting at 10.25 am.

5 Management Accounts to 31 October 2008

The Executive Director of Finance and College Services presented the Management accounts to end October 2008. He highlighted the following points:

- **Trading Surplus:** The budgeted surplus was £52k; the actual trading surplus was showing a deficit of £300k and the position was not projected to improve.
- **Para 3:** All LSC targets may not be met. Adult learner income was currently below target as were the employer responsive targets, particularly around Train to Gain.
- **Para 5:** Part-time fees were £101k under budget. Projected income was expected to be £250k against a budget of £564k. There was potential for a further £185k of fees but this was subject to check and could be lower. Continuing increases in fees and the economic downturn were impacting on income.
- **Pay Costs:** Slow recruitment had impacted on the profile which was £102k under budget.
- **Non-pay Costs:** Property Costs were currently £248k over budget, down from the previous month. The reason was partly attributed to the carrying forward of 2007/08 summer works costs into 2008/09.
- **Para 26:** The Principal's contingency fund began the year with £632 and currently stood at £148k. Managers had been advised there were no funds available from this budget.

The Executive Director, in concluding his report, informed governors that he was seriously concerned about the budget, which was being re-forecast now, and invited comments and questions.

In response to governors' queries, the following points were noted:

- The £131k bank charge was non-utilisation fees on the loans from Lloyds/TSB plus the arrangement fee. Interest rates had increased since agreement was reached with the bank and the fixed terms were, therefore, benefiting the College.
- The College's cash position was affected by LSC payment profiles at this time of the year.
- Borrowings were anticipated January, February, March. Movement into Category B financial status was in line with the projection.
- The first draft of the budget re-forecast would be available for consideration by Finance and General Purposes Committee in February 2009.
- A full course-costing system was not in place. However, new programmes were subject to a course costing model. Managers were being provided with contribution statements quarterly.

The current position was noted.

6 Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 2007-08

The Executive Director of Finance and College Services presented the draft annual report and accounts, together with associated papers, for approval by the Corporation and subsequent signature of the accounts and letter of representation by the Chair and Principal.

He reminded the Board that comfort in the accounts could be found from both the internal and external Audit reports and the Annual Report of the Audit Committee and confirmed that both the Audit Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee had considered the accounts. He referred governors to the covering paper from which the following points were highlighted:

- The accounts mirrored the position in the management accounts to end July 2008 with the exception of the later FRS17 adjustment and a small (not significant) adjustment in fixed assets.
- A budget surplus of £800k had been achieved against a forecast of £600k.
- The drop in income had been off-set by savings in non-pay costs.
- Train to Gain was below budget but had posted a 48% increase on the previous year.
- Work based learning grew by about 18%.
- Fees for adult FE provision were £22k down on the previous year.
- Lecturers' salaries had risen by 1.8%. Overall, pay costs were increasing ahead of income.
- A contingent liability had been noted in the accounts to meet a claim of potentially £2.5m from the Cambridgeshire LGPS for the shortfall in the funding of ex-Isle College employees on transfer to the Norfolk Pension Scheme.
- FRS 17: Investment performance has not been good and the actuarial assumptions have changed impacting on the Income and Expenditure account.
- Non-pay costs increased by a pre-planned 8.3%, but would need to be restrained in the current year.

The Executive Director referred governors to the Annual Report of the Internal Auditors and their overall assurance opinion. He confirmed that no significant control weaknesses had been identified. In respect of the items mentioned in the Internal Auditors' summary report, he noted that the ILT Strategy had been agreed and was moving forward; a number of contracts for the capital scheme had now been received for signature; the IT environment, disaster recovery and business continuity plan was to be considered later in the agenda; and, value-for-money in catering was being monitored by Audit Committee.

The Chair of Audit Committee presented its Annual Report and confirmed that, in their view, the high risk items identified by auditors throughout the year were being acted upon and their consideration of the accounts had led them to support a recommendation for approval.

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP) confirmed that his Committee had examined the papers in detail and recommended the accounts for approval.

Andrew Cave proposed, seconded by Cheri Crosley, that

- (i) the Annual Report and Consolidated Accounts 2006-07 be approved;**

Derek Stringer proposed, seconded by Andrew Cave, that

- (ii) the Letter of Representation be approved.**

Agreed unanimously.

7 Student Union Accounts 2007-08

The Principal presented the accounts and advised that both Audit and Finance and General Purposes Committees had considered the accounts and been satisfied that controls now in place had been effective.

Cheri Crosley proposed, seconded by Andrew Cave, that the Student Union accounts be approved. Agreed unanimously.

8 Property Strategy Update

This item was deemed to be "Confidential".

9 Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan

The Principal presented the College's Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan for approval. He explained that Internal Audit had identified a number of key risks and recommended actions and he sought to provide assurance that these were being addressed. In particular, the core response team were meeting on a regular basis and the Disaster Recovery Plan had been updated. Ways in which the Plan might be tested were still under consideration.

Cheri Crosley proposed, seconded by Roger Ward, approval of the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan. Agreed.

Di Atkinson left the meeting at 12.30 pm.

10 2007/2008 Self Assessment Report (SAR) and Financial Management and Control Evaluation (FMCE)

The Principal presented proposed grades for the SAR for consideration and note. He explained that updated guidance from the LSC had delayed consideration of the full SAR by Performance Review and Quality Committee (PR&QC) at their October meeting and proposed that an Executive Summary be brought to the Corporation in March 2009 following detailed review by PR&QC.

In presenting an overview, the Principal reported that grade movement was generally downwards. He highlighted the draft grade for management and leadership was 1/2; overall success rates on long courses were down; but that overall performance for support to learners was grade 1.

The impact of LSC changes to decisions around programme approval and a move towards full qualifications in Foundation and skills for life were outlined.

Noted.

The FMCE was presented for information and note. The Principal advised that the Self Assessment Report Questionnaire (SARQ) had been replaced by the FMCE – a new tool for self assessment of governance and financial management. An overall self-assessment grade of "outstanding" had been awarded. The Audit Committee had been remitted to approve the document for submission to the LSC and uploading to the LSC Gateway. Audit Committee had approved the document at their meeting on 13 November 2008.

Noted.

11 Student Numbers Update

The Principal presented an update on learner numbers noting that 16-18 recruitment was strong – exceeding target by 107 (full time) and 46 (part-time). Adult responsive (19+) targets were down but it was envisaged that the shortfall in this area would be made up by Employer Responsive work. January enrolments were expected to improve the situation.

The current position was noted.

Richard Williamson left the meeting at 12.43 pm.

12 Principal's Strategy Report

The Principal referred governors to his report and attachment from the DCSF setting out the government's priorities for 2009-10. The 4.5% increase in Train to Gain was noted and would be taken into account in the pre-Christmas planning process.

Noted.

13 Governor Planning (Half) Day 1 April 2009

Governors **agreed** the following themes for the half day planning event in April:

- (a) Strategic mission, values and goals
- (b) Showcasing – Construction and Engineering

Further, that key areas of national/regional policy development should form topics for pre-corporation briefings, the first of which was to be the "Framework for Excellence".

14 Minutes of Committee Meetings and Working Groups

(i) Property Steering Group 16 September 2008

Peter Dixon, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption and confirmed that the updates provided during the course of this Corporation Meeting reflected the current position.

(ii) Performance Review and Quality Committee 8 October 2008

Paul Cotton, Vice Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. He highlighted the curriculum review of Train to Gain, the self assessment process and complaints. He reiterated the Committee's recommendation to Corporation to approve the revised Policy document: Safeguarding Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy September 2008 (Amended).

(iii) Special Finance and General Purposes Committee 15 October 2008

Andrew Cave, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption and confirmed that the purpose of the Special Meeting – to discuss the S106 Agreement – had been superseded by further events and the Board had been brought up to date at this meeting.

(iv) Employment Policy Committee 15 October 2008

Derek Stringer, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. He highlighted the Health and Safety Annual Report and recommended for approval the proposed structure of the Senior Management Team.

(v) Audit Committee 13 November 2008

Cheri Crosley, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. She reported the discussions with the Property Services Manager regarding problems identified in the VFM internal audit report on catering. She emphasised the Committee's concern regarding slowness of responses by management to the internal audit service reports and the Principal was asked to raise again with the Senior Management Team.

The Chair of the Committee was pleased to report improved attendance figures achieved by its members and the improvements in the Student Union accounts.

The Chair moved adoption of the Minutes, en bloc, seconded by Jack Bantoff. Agreed unanimously.

15 Any Other Business

- (i) CB asked about progress on the farm at March – a delay was advised by GG.
- (ii) RA commented on the positive Strategic Liaison Meeting with Fenland District Council on 1 December 2008.
- (iii) The Principal reported the financial status of the College had been confirmed as 2 – Good by the LSC.
- (iv) The Clerk reported that the guidance document for the new model publication scheme required by the Office of the Information Commissioner had been placed on the College website and uploaded to the LSC Gateway.

16 Date and Venue for next Meeting

Wednesday, 11 March 2008 – Milton

The meeting closed at 1.00 pm