

<p><b>The College of West Anglia</b>  <b>Minutes of Corporation Meeting</b>  <b>12 May 2010, Room A106, Isle Campus, Wisbech</b>  <b>10.15 am</b></p>
---

<b>Present</b>	Peter Dixon	Chair
	Roger Almond Kate Barnett Andrew Cave Spencer Cranmer Derek Stringer Mike Williams	Kate Atherton Sharon Cambridge Jamie Cook Nick Daubney Sandy Willatt
	David Pomfret	Principal
<b>Attending</b>	Arlene Clark	Executive Director, Curriculum and Learning
	Richard Williamson	Executive Director, Finance and Information
	Hilary Reid	Clerk to the Corporation

*The meeting was preceded by a briefing led by Paul Lawrence of KPMG on "Future Funding for the Further Education Sector"*

**1 Apologies**

Jack Bantoft, Paul Cotton, David Steele, Roger Ward.

**2 Minutes of previous Meeting – 10 March 2010**

The Minutes of the meeting of 10 March 2010 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**3 Matters Arising**

**(i) Page 5 item 11 Communication with Staff**

The Principal had met with the Staff Governor, as agreed, and further staff meetings were to be arranged.

**4 Minutes of Committee Meetings and Working Groups**

**(i) Finance and General Purposes Committee 23 February 2010**

Andrew Cave, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. He reminded governors that the Board had addressed the significant items arising at the meeting of 10 March 2010 – the re-forecast budget, Student Union Accounts and the Fees Policy.

**(ii) Search Committee 24 February 2010**

Sharon Cambridge, Vice Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. She advised that the issues raised had been addressed at the Corporation Meeting of 10 March 2010.

**(iii) Performance Review and Quality Committee 3 March 2010**

Kate Atherton, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. She commented on the interesting presentation by the Faculty of Creative Arts; key messages on College performance and the decisions on grading in the Self Assessment Report. Of note was the higher profile for the equality and diversity element of the SAR, recognising that this was a limiting factor at inspection.

**(iv) Property Steering Group 16 March 2010**

Peter Dixon, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. He explained that there had been a subsequent meeting on 16 March attended by the newly appointed Architects, Pick Everard and Fusion. Their first report had been received at that meeting. The land swap at Milton remained subject to negotiation with the Parish Council. The agreed maintenance programme was gradually moving forward. He asked governors to note the programme was separate from the property strategy.

**(v) Employment Policy Committee 24 March 2010**

Derek Stringer, Chair of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. He highlighted the negative results of the staff survey. In particular, communication remained an issue, and confidence in the future of the organisation had fallen from 72% to 44%. It was noted that "Succession Planning" and "Communication" had been addressed in the Priority Objectives.

Governors considered a number of suggestions for promoting their visibility to staff – the Chair and Principal agreed to discuss further at their meeting on 24 May 2010.

**Action: PD/DP**

**(vi) Audit Committee 31 March 2010**

Nick Daubney, member of the Committee, proposed the Minutes for adoption. The Clerk highlighted the annual review of performance of the Internal and External Auditors and the Committee's recommendation to re-appoint them for 2010/11.

Attention was drawn to the risk report in the confidential minutes. The "no assurance" outcome of the internal audit of Timetabling was also noted.

The Executive Director of Finance and Information provided an explanation and some background to the Timetabling audit and confirmed that plans had been put in place by the deadline of 30 April 2010. The Director acknowledged that the system was not fully embedded and that Programme Managers had a key role in ensuring its success.

**Peter Dixon moved adoption of the Minutes, en bloc, seconded by Kate Barnett. Agreed unanimously.**

## **5 Reports from the Student Union**

The Student Governor provided a verbal report. He advised that he had participated in a quality assurance session with Technology and that, in terms of student reports, canteen issues were the only matters arising.

**Noted.**

## **6 Management Accounts to 31 March 2010**

The Executive Director of Finance and Information reported. The current position was better than budget with a forecast deficit of £641k. The biggest risk remained the College's ability to undertake and spend the budgeted maintenance costs by the end of the year. The Director highlighted the following points:

- Contribution statements were not yet fully accurate and not driving savings. In the longer term they should influence the overall budget.
- Income was broadly on target with the exception of PCDL. Main risk was the Train to Gain budget with the remaining 4 months being very tightly managed. The SFA would be re-introducing audits this year which could result in claw-back.
- Pay costs were projected to be on or slightly over budget by the end of the year but provision brought forward from 2010/11 would bring back under budget.
- Maintenance remained the key issue for non-pay costs.
- Pension payment to Cambridgeshire LGPS was imminent – final contract had been received for signature under seal. Payment would follow.

Governors requested, and were given, an explanation of the “satisfactory” financial health grade and the impact of departmental contributions towards overheads.

**The current position was noted.**

*Nick Daubney declared an interest in the following item.*

## **7 Accommodation Strategy Update**

This item was deemed to be “Confidential”.

## **8 Land Disposal Update**

The Principal presented a report to provide an overview of the position with regard to the current opportunities regarding the college's land assets and their potential disposal. He noted the need to move to a more planned approach and that there were multiple opportunities beyond those described in the report.

He explained that detailed papers had been considered by Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Property Steering Group in respect of Gaywood Field and the land at Milton.

An approach from a developer expressing an interest in the development of Ebbs Field was being progressed. The potential for the land to provide additional parking space had been ruled out on the grounds of the substantial cost involved.

Talks with the Borough Council were taking place regarding the potential of planning opportunities for the Meadowgate land at Wisbech Campus. Expressions of interest had been received from two parties.

Grove House in Chatteris continued to be marketed and only one expression of interest had been received to date at well below the market value.

**Noted.**

## **9 Financial Outlook and Budget Assumptions 2010/11**

The Executive Director of Finance and Information referred governors to his report, adding that it had been considered in detail by the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the meeting on 27 April 2010. He underlined the fact that the College was entering a position of reducing income and a deficit which, next year, had to be brought into surplus. The Director invited comments from the Board which were noted as follows:

- An awareness campaign with managers, staff and unions was vital
- The importance of departmental contributions
- Staff needed to be aware that the College's position was not unique in the sector
- Communication with staff should be frank and open
- Staff appreciate the pressures faced by the College and the sector but do need to know what shape the College will be following rationalisation

**Noted.**

## **10 Review of Governance and Financial Management Regulations**

The Clerk and the Executive Director of Finance and Information presented the Governance and Financial Management Regulations for adoption.

The Clerk explained the Regulations had been reviewed and amended to reflect statutory changes and the decisions of the Board during the previous year and had been considered in detail by the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 27 April 2010. She highlighted changes relating to governors' expenses and new requirements re car insurance and related documents. (Page 34 referred).

The Director highlighted changes to the Treasury Management Policy; and the disposal of fully depreciated assets (Page 37 referred).

**Andrew Cave proposed, seconded by Derek Stringer, that the revised Governance and Financial Management Regulations be adopted.**

## **11 Priority Objectives and Strategic Plan**

The Principal presented draft Priority Objectives for 2010/11 adding that work remained to be done to improve the document and to make targets smarter by taking out some of the detail. He invited comments from the Board, noted as follows:

- Add to item 2 Curriculum and Learning lead statement ..... "that is in synergy with available financial resources."
- Strengthen the accommodation strategy clause to communicate the scale of the challenge.
- Ensure target response dates had been agreed
- Proposals in the Human Resources section to be more specific.

The Principal advised that the Board's comments would be considered by the working group and a revised final version would be presented to the Board in July 2010.

A draft Strategic Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13 would be brought for comment and/or approval to the July meeting of the Board.

**Noted.**

## **12 Principal's Strategy Report**

The Principal reported as follows:

### **(i) Inspections**

- **Initial Teacher Training:** The inspection had been part of the ARU Ofsted inspection. Verbal feedback intimates that provision was at least "good" and stronger than ARU's.
- **Plaxtole House:** Inspection of provision for under 18s in residential care was positive. The overall rating was "good" and "outstanding" in the promotion of equality and diversity.
- **Training Quality Standard (TQS):** Conditional approval had been received (conditional upon evidence of CRM use and embedded systems).
- **Integrated Quality Enhancement Review (IQER):** The final outcome was awaited but the inspection went well with no significant weaknesses identified. Confidence was confirmed for both academic standards and quality of learning opportunities and confirmation provided that the accuracy and/or completeness of public information can be relied upon. Three areas of good practice and three desirable recommendations were also identified.

**The inspection outcomes were noted.**

### **(ii) Tots to Teens Children's Centre**

The College had been unable to secure a provider who could fulfil the legal obligations required under TUPE regulations. The loss to the College of around £25k per annum could not be sustained, particularly when the majority of users were not college students or staff.

A decision to close the centre from the end of July 2010 had been taken and staff had been advised. A meeting held with Cambridgeshire County Council and parents to discuss alternative provision took place on 5 May 2010. It was likely that future private sector provision in Wisbech would provide employment opportunities for the staff.

**The closure of Tots to Teens Children's Centre from end July 2010 was noted.**

### **(iii) Academy Update**

An interim Principal had been appointed to the Academy and had taken up the role with effect from 10 May 2010.

Governors commented on whether the post held on a temporary basis would provide the motivation needed to drive the academy forward. The Principal provided assurances about the postholder's commitment and advised that the appointment was a secondment and could lead to the opportunity of a more permanent position for that person.

In response to a governor query, the Principal explained that the additional workload at SMT level was led by him but was being shared by colleagues in the team. The Head of Faculty, Business, Humanities, Science and Computing, had a key role together with the County Council's seconded Academy Development Manager, Paul Dunning. The Project Management Company, Cambridgeshire Education, appointed by the County Council, was also making a strong contribution.

Three College governors had volunteered to become members of the Trust – the next stage was formation of the Board.

**The progress report was noted.**

**(iv) Health and Safety**

The Health and Safety Executive had closed their investigation into the accident at the King's Lynn campus and would be taking no action against the College.

There had been no further developments in the Milton tractor incident investigation.

The College had successfully defended a civil case involving allegations from a student of an attack by a College pig.

**The positive outcomes were noted.**

**13 Clerk's Items:**

**Appointment of Internal Audit Service and External Auditors**

The Clerk referred members to the recommendations of the Audit Committee in the Minutes of the Meeting of 31 March 2010 and invited their approval of the re-appointment of the auditors.

**Sharon Cambridge proposed, seconded by Andrew Cave, that PricewaterhouseCoopers and KPMG be re-appointed for a further year. Agreed.**

**14 Any Other Business**

(i) HR: The resignation of David Steele was noted. His possible co-option to the Property Steering Group would be considered by the Search Committee.

(ii) KB: Attention was drawn to the success of Milton students being promoted on Weetabix packs.

(iii) JC: A new student governor had been nominated by the Student Union.

(iv) PD: The resignation of the Clerk was noted and she was thanked for her contribution to the Board

**15 Date and venue for the next scheduled Meeting**

Wednesday, 7 July 2010 – King's Lynn Campus.

**The meeting closed at 12.35 pm**