

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY

held on Tuesday, 13th July 2010 at 9.30 a.m.

Present: Mr G R Baird, Mr S van der Borgh, Revd G Bridgewater, Mr C P Clementi, Mr C J Eley, Mr M Hodgson, Dr J Johnston (Principal), Mr A R C Lane, Mr E I Tattersall, Mr H Underwood, Mr A Vourexakis, Mr C J P Watney

In attendance: Mr I F Dumbleton (Director of Finance), Mr S R Gilham (Project Manager), Ms N C Whitehead (Clerk)

Apologies received: Prof C Behagg, Ms S. Bridges, Dr D Cassell, Mrs V Chaffin-Laird, Mr R Pope, Mrs C Watson

In the Chair: Mr G R Baird

932) **Declarations of interest:** There were no declarations of interests.

933) **Urgent Business:** Wolfson.

Paper: Tender report – Home Economics Refurbishment

The Chair explained the terms of the Wolfson grant for science and technology equipment which required the college to meet the bill for any building works, fees and VAT. Tenders had now been received from 3 of the 5 companies invited to bid which suggested that these items, priced at over £200k on existing plans, would not be affordable. The Project Manager explained that the main costs were the electrical and ventilation requirements. It was proposed that the college pursue alterations to the plans with the two most competitive bidders with a view to reaching an affordable solution to enhanced food and nutrition facilities - still to be implemented over the summer break. As a last resort the college would pursue an alternative allocation of the Wolfson grant within the Foundation's criteria.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved a budget of up to £80k to include building works, fees and VAT on the condition that all regulations were met to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for the Home Economics department.

934) **Minutes** of the meetings held on 29th March 2010 were approved.

935) **Matters arising**

- i) **Items 918-919:** The Clerk confirmed all declarations of eligibility and interest had been received.
- ii) **Item 923a):** A fixed loan on £600k of the capital project loan for the John Dew building had been secured at a slightly more favourable rate than anticipated of 2.4% (plus 1%).
- iii) **Item 923f):** Nothing had been heard from the YPLA enabling progress on changes to the Instruments and Articles.
- iv) **Item 924a):** Tenon had been reappointed as the Financial Statements Auditors on the terms agreed although it was noted that a CPI rather than RPI increase might in future be more appropriate.
- v) **Item 926b):** The SFCF's SFBac prospectus had not yet been finalised but was expected in the coming year.

936) **Appointment of Governors**

The Clerk explained that the College Council had elected two new student governors from a field of four candidates using the new election procedures agreed by the Governing Body at its previous

meeting. Members noted that between them they had a perspective on joining Collyer's from both a local partner school and an 'external' feeder school. The Governing Body ratified both appointments.

937) **Report from the Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Papers: Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings on 18th May and 29th June 2010 (Parts I and II); minutes of the Premises Sub-committee meeting on 29th June 2010 (Parts I and II); minutes of the Joint Staff-Governors' Consultative Group meeting on 29th June 2010

a) Post-project review: John Dew building

Paper: Post-project review: John Dew building

The Chair drew attention in particular to the lessons and observations aspect of the report which included recommendations on procurement, design and M&E. Members were pleased to note that the lessons learnt on ventilation were being put into practice in considering the Home Economics refurbishment (but that the John Dew building had not proved too uncomfortable in the recent hot weather). Furthermore it was acknowledged that any snagging items should not detract from the overall success of the building which had been completed within budget.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the Post-Project Review for submission to the LSC.

b) Fees & Charges 2010/2011

Paper: Fees and Charges for 2010-2011

The Principal explained that the College proposed maintaining the College Fund, daytime and international student fees at the same level to reflect ability to pay within the current economic climate. Some moderate increases for some adult education courses were proposed but with similar considerations in mind. The Principal explained that the offer had been decided against the background of funding cuts and a qualification accreditation process but with no clear outcomes emerging in time for finalisation of the prospectus. Members noted the move towards more professional courses such as SAGE, the introduction of more flexible Access (to HE) courses and teacher training courses. They welcomed the college management team's flexibility in seeking to secure the sustainability of Adult Education in the long-term including consideration of potential partnerships with other providers.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the Fees & Charges 2010-2011.

(c) Pay Policy 2010

Paper: Pay Policy September 2010

The Principal explained that only minor changes to the policy were proposed, for example, to reflect the allowances provided to the new Teaching and Learning Developers. Members discussed the college's aim to maintain current staffing levels whilst accommodating some growth in student numbers. They recognised that any specific class size limit could be too prescriptive but sought reassurance that reasonable deployment in the best interests of the college was provided for in the policy through, for example, its reference to the 'needs identified in the college's development plan'.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the Pay Policy 2010.

(d) Management Accounts

Paper: Financial Report for the period from 1st August 2009 to 31st May 2010

The Director of Finance reported that, at the end of May, the surplus was £141k (against a revised January forecast of c.£70k). End June figures suggested a further £11k improvement on this figure producing a potential surplus of £152k. The key variances were an increase in income from

work-based learning and full cost recovery Adult Education courses. Payroll costs were slightly below forecast owing to the lower spine points of several new members of staff and the phasing of the agreed pay increase. Non-pay expenditure was also under budget by c. £12k.

Members thanked the Director of Finance for his careful financial management.

[10.30a.m. Mr I F Dumbleton, Mr E I Tattersall, Mr H Underwood and Mr A Vourexakis withdrew from the meeting followed at 10.35a.m. by the Principal and Clerk]

(e) The pay and conditions of service of the Senior Postholders, the Assistant Principals and the Director of Finance

Part II ((Criterion a) Personal information relating to an individual)

[10.45a.m. The Principal, Clerk, Mr I F Dumbleton, Mr E I Tattersall, Mr H Underwood and Mr A Vourexakis rejoined the meeting]

(f) Financial regulations

Paper: Updates to Financial Regulations

The Director of Finance explained that the changes proposed followed recommendations from the internal auditors (IAS) in respect of anti-money laundering measures. Although a low risk at the college, the monies received from foreign agents on behalf of international students in particular suggested some enhanced safeguards would be advisable. The measures had been communicated to all relevant staff such as the Admissions Officer. Members questioned whether it was good practice for the Finance Director also to be the Anti-Money Laundering Officer (AMLO) and were advised this was in line with advice provided by the IAS as a proportionate measure in a relatively small organisation. It was noted too that the Director of Finance was not a cheque signatory.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the changes to the Financial regulations.

g) Policies

Papers: Draft Safeguarding, Safe recruitment and Child protection policies, a revised Staff Code of Conduct and Curriculum Policy

i) Safeguarding

The Principal explained that this was a new overarching strategy designed to address the full extent of the College's safeguarding duty in respect of young people and vulnerable adults. It sought to make clear staff and student responsibilities as well as those of governors including the link governors who had agreed its scope. The policies had been provided to the Local Authority Development Officer (LADO) for comment.

ii) Safer Recruitment

This was a further new policy for the college although reflecting existing practice. Members noted the aspirational significance of 'safer' rather than 'safe' recruitment which they requested to be applied consistently throughout the document. They noted the uncertainty as to the future of the previous Government's plans for an Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and that CRB checks were not required on students. The Principal explained that the college did however liaise effectively with relevant agencies to establish any issues of potential concern in respect of students.

iii) Child Protection

The Clerk explained that this was a revised policy, for example, to update the forms of abuse to include financial abuse and forced marriage. It also clarified appropriate staff action in the event of disclosure which members heard had been effectively communicated to all staff in recent training.

Action: Clerk to consider the inclusion of contact details for the link governors with those involved.

iv) Staff Code of Conduct

The Principal explained that (without being too unwieldy or prescriptive) this revised policy sought to make appropriate behaviour less open to interpretation than in its predecessor – thus facilitating any need to address breaches of its terms. Of most note were the enhancements on safeguarding and equality and diversity issues.

v) Curriculum Policy

The Principal outlined the changes which included recognition of the SFBac pilot. Other changes included the end of Key skills and their replacement with Thinking, Reasoning and Knowledge (TRAK) skills as well as an increase in the BTEC offer (to include Business Studies, Art and Design, Sport and IT) in preference to Applied A levels.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved all five policies subject to the minor amendments discussed.

938) Report from the Audit Committee

Papers: Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting on 21st June 2010; Risk Management Report 09/10

Mr Eley, on behalf of the Chair of the Audit Committee, referred members to the minutes of the latest meeting. He explained that the internal auditors had made only a small number of minor recommendations in their three latest reports which gave assurance with regard to the college's systems. He and the Chair had been involved in the recent review of risk management which showed an increasingly low likelihood of the residual risks but more detailed contingency planning by SMT in the event of different types of difficulty. Members asked that in future a summary of the approach taken in assessing risk be included in the report and thought it might be timely to once more have sight of the Disaster Recovery Plan.

Resolved: The Governing Body confirmed full compliance with the Turnbull requirements for 2009/10 and approved the Risk Management Report 2009/10.

939) Report from the Quality & Standards Committee

Paper: Minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee meeting on 1st July 2010

Mr van der Borgh reported (on behalf of the Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee) that the recent meeting had seen all constituencies including the new student governors contributing to a lively discussion. The Chair had been re-elected and the focus been a review of the College Operational Plan to identify the action taken in respect of each of the College Strategic Aims. It was considered to be very thorough presentation of action with clear outcomes. Subject areas identified in the SAR as needing enhancement had been covered and the Committee was pleased to endorse the work to-date in implementing the college QIP. Similarly the Governance QIP was reviewed and the significant work on E&D and safeguarding noted. Members were also updated on the latest indications that the Framework for Excellence may be a casualty of the new government's efficiency savings. Summaries of the cross-College staff and student questionnaires had been studied but a low response rate from students rendered the outcomes difficult to act upon and a radical look at the way this questionnaire was administered (including its timing and potential incentives) recommended for the future. The Cross College Management report indicated healthy retention and attendance rates (although the latter were down by 1 per cent). In its annual self-assessment review the Committee concluded that it operated effectively, was well supported by all constituencies, well served by information and papers from Senior Managers and that it provided a good service to the Board of Governors as a medium that is sensitive to quality matters at the College.

[12 noon: Mr C Clementi left the meeting]

940) **The Student Voice**

Paper: Minutes of the College Council meeting held on 29th June 2010

The student governors reported that the recent meeting of the College Council had suggested a new Healthy Eating group on which views were being sought and potential members identified. A three-day Rag 'Week' had been agreed with a move to it supporting both a local and international charity. Following cancellation of the 2010 Prom, alternative ideas were being considered to suit students' tastes and pockets. To encourage full participation a new rule had been agreed which meant that alternatives would be sought if tutor representatives missed two consecutive meetings of the College Council. A recycling scheme to start in September had been proposed and the possibility of a Fencing Club discussed.

Since that meeting early indications were that students were alarmed by a recent announcement that the Government might be considering the end of modular A level exams. The Principal explained that these ideas were at an early stage but she would ensure that student views were fed into consultations through, for example, her presence on a National Curriculum Committee which would be preparing a written response to the proposals.

The student governors also reported that the newly announced requirement from September for staff and students to display their ID badges at all times had been met with concern from students on the grounds that they could be embarrassing for new students uneasy about settling into college for the first time as well as costly and difficult to administer if students frequently forgot or lost them. The Principal explained that the college had considered carefully how best to meet its duty to safeguard students whilst not impinging on their rights or current freedoms in accessing the college site. The passes and lanyards had seemed the simplest and most proportionate way to seek to protect their personal safety and their property. Such requirements were now common in the workplace and she hoped therefore that students would soon adapt to the change as a necessary adjunct when moving away from school uniforms. She hoped the student governors would be able to play their part in relaying these arguments to tutor groups via the College Council. The new Safeguarding Group would provide a further forum for student views to be expressed.

941) **Three-year Financial Forecast**

Papers: Budget 2010-2011; Financial Forecast 2010-2013

The Director of Finance explained that for the latest Three-Year forecast the college had had to make its own planning assumptions as these were no longer provided by the now defunct LSC. Given their significance in affecting a high proportion of the college's budget, of most concern were the forthcoming pay negotiations against the backdrop of both public sector funding cuts and a Government commitment to honour schoolteachers' pay. Increases in the college's pension contributions were also significant, particularly in Years 2 and 3 when they would impact on the full college financial year. A potential deficit in Year 3 also reflected an anticipated increase in interest rates and inflationary cost increases. The college was now increasingly reliant on income from international students and apprenticeships but there were limits on the extent to which advantage could be taken of these options. The forecasts indicated a fall in financial health gradings to 'Good' in the coming three years.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the budget for the year ending 31st July 2011 and the Three-year Financial Forecast 2010-2013.

942) **The Principal's Report**

Paper: Principal's Report to the Governing Body Summer Term 2010

a) The Principal reported that:

- i) The potential impact of the **machinery of government changes** from 1st April had dominated the year, only to be overtaken by the uncertainty following the change in Government after the election

in May. Early indications suggested that the headline messages of ‘freedom and fairness’ leading to reductions in bureaucracy could be welcome to the college. However the growth in academies raised the threat of a duplication of study places at a time when efficiency gains were required.

- ii) Internally, the college had been preparing enhancements to **the curriculum** through, for example, TRAK all of which would contribute to the SFBac which was going well in its pilot stages;
- iii) Much work had been undertaken on **equality and diversity and safeguarding**. This included a new post for a security officer who would be monitoring the perimeter of the site, car park and canteen particularly in the busy periods of break and lunch times.
- iv) On potential **student intake**, Welcome Day had gone well and, in spite of a small drop in attendees, the college had made more offers of places than at a similar point in previous years with interviews still underway. All non-attendees were being followed up by telephone.

[12.52: Mr A Vourexakis left the meeting]

- v) The college had once again achieved **Investors in People** (IiP) status. The written report, being compiled after a series of confidential interviews which included the Chair of the Governing Body, was expected shortly.

[12.55: Mr H Underwood left the meeting]

Members discussed the report including the contributions from Heads of House, noting the efforts made in monitoring attendance and achievements in Sport and other Faculty areas. The Principal was thanked for an excellent Report.

[12.57: Mr H Underwood rejoined the meeting]

- b) The parent governor, as Chair of the **Collyer’s Association**, reported further on the work of the equivalent of a PTA (parent-teachers association). The Association had been faced with a marked decline in income of some 30% (amounting to c. £1,000) over the past year. The Committee had worked hard to address the problem benefiting from the sterling efforts of a one-off Christmas Hamper raffle organised by one member (producing £659) as well as the introduction of gourmet cards (£825). The latter would be repeated alongside the traditional 300 Club in the new college year and the introduction of a new Gift Aid option from any donations.

The income had been spent in a variety of ways. The Committee had been scrupulous in applying rigorous criteria in assessing requests for bursaries, of which three had been awarded. In addition to supporting such overseas work, the Committee was increasingly seeking to help projects which benefited the local community. This allowed for modest contributions to benefit a wider range of students, for example with course textbooks, who appeared to be suffering greater financial hardship in the difficult economic circumstances. One student had been helped in his preparations for the 2012 Olympics; the college had also contributed to the Yearbook, student prizes and an alcohol awareness talk. The late failure of the Prom, removing the need for the Association to pay for the security, had instead allowed for the purchase of a new PA system for the college. The Committee had appreciated the college’s support – most notably from the Principal and the new Secretary, Sarah Hawen. As Chair he was keen to ensure that the Association continued in the same health as in the past so as to be able to continue to support the college and students.

943) **Chairman’s Report**

Governors were asked to note the dates of meetings for 2010-2011 as listed on page 31 of the Principal’s Report. The Autumn Q&S meeting was confirmed for 29th November and it was agreed that the proposed January meeting of F&GP would not be necessary given the dates for December and early March.

944) **Trustees’ Report**

In the absence of the Chair of Trustees, it was agreed to postpone his report until the next meeting of the Governing Body.

945) **Review of the Rules & Bye-laws**

Paper: Rules & Bye-laws of the Governing Body July 2010

The Clerk outlined the proposed minor changes in the Rules & Bye-laws, which reflected the new members of the Governing Body. Members noted that further changes to references to the LSC, for example, would be proposed once the proposed changes to the I&As were received.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the revised Rules & Bye-laws July 2010.

946) **Governance Quality Framework**

Paper: Governing Body Annual Assessment of its Performance

Members agreed they could tick questions 1-10 and that no improvements appeared necessary in response to Question 11.

947) **Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 7th December 2010 at 9.30 a.m. at Collyer's.**

The meeting closed at 13.10 p.m.

Chairman

Date

NCW 14/07/2010