

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
JOINT STAFF-GOVERNORS' CONSULTATIVE GROUP
held on Wednesday 15th June 2011 at 3.30pm**

Present: Mr Graham Baird (Governor), Ms Jayne Fenn (Elected AE tutor representative), Mr Paul Kulikowski (NAS/UWT), Mr George Lear (Elected teaching staff representative), Ms K McConville (UNISON), Mr Ed Tattersall (Staff Governor & Acting ATL representative)

Apologies received: Revd. Guy Bridgewater (Governor), Mrs Philippa Ibbs (Elected support staff representative), Mr Mark Ramey (NUT), Mrs M J Russell (Attendee)

In attendance: Mrs S Gardiner, Mr S A Martell, Ms N Whitehead (Clerk)

In the Chair: Mr E I Tattersall

1. Election of Chairman

Members agreed the Clerk's proposal that the election of Chairman be postponed until the Autumn term. This would allow for more stable membership following the recent election of the staff governor and the forthcoming elections of staff representatives as well as changes with two of the four Trade Union representatives.

2. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2011 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

Item 4a (re Item 6): The AE representative reported that, leaving aside some teething difficulties in its operation, the new vending machine in the canteen was in principle helpful in addressing demand at peak usage times in the evenings.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Premises Manager over vending machine problems.

[3.40pm Mr Lear joined the meeting.]

5. Report from the Equal & Diversity Committee

Papers: Minutes of the Equality & Diversity (E&D) Committee of 23rd May 2011 and E&D Action Plan 2011-12

The Assistant Principal (Progress) explained that improvements in the college's management of E&D issues not least through regular Committee meetings had been brought about in tune with developments in the quality, Every Child Matters and Safeguarding agendas. These had been further complemented by changes brought in by the new Health and Safety Officer and further enhancements to the premises were in the pipeline. Recent initiatives had included the very well attended HE and Careers evenings which had dealt with the socio-economic (subsidiary Protected Characteristic) concerns of students considering HE. The new parents evening for parents from non-feeder schools had also been successful and would be repeated next year.

Both a member of staff and the College Council had attended external training relating to "Getting Students Involved" in actively promoting E&D. The Committee was seeking to take a fresh look

at the college in order to make an objective judgement about whether the college actively demonstrated a positive outlook on E&D and to produce fresh ideas for the forthcoming year. Progress on implementing EIAs for both agreed and new policies was good. An ethnic minority member of staff had been assisted in overcoming a language barrier.

The E&D Action Plan for the next academic year focussed on review of the E&D Duty and schemes and fully incorporating EIAs within the college policy review cycle. Monitoring of protected characteristics would be further enhanced with a particular focus on disability but there were no plans to address sexuality. Here the focus would be on messages of reassurance rather than enquiry into an individual's sexuality before they reached adulthood. E&D would continue as a standing item on the weekly SMT meeting agenda.

Members noted that Adult Ed were currently represented on the Committee by the Adult Ed manager, Paul Clarke (who would however soon be changing roles) and that the availability of an AE tutor to join the group would be much appreciated. Training in the past year had included AE tutors and the forthcoming training evening would include some key points to consider in terms of E&D (including signposting to the training presentations on Sharepoint) as well as a Health and Safety item. The AE representative commented that a number of students now raised E&D issues and the new marketing of the college, for example to include Access courses, might further affect this profile.

[4.00pm Mr S Martell left the meeting]

6. Career & Professional Development Report

Paper: Report on Staff Development to JSGCG

In addition to the tabled report, Mrs Gardiner explained that the study leave week had enabled consideration of a number of issues including a well-received pensions presentation although she appreciated that teachers had found the change from two to one week's study leave challenging in terms of planning time. There was one further Inset Day due on 18th July.

With regard to IfL membership fees a further update from the SFCF had been circulated. Members expressed irritation that the IfL's reminders implied agreement had been reached between Government and the Unions that payment of the fees by teachers was compulsory. This was not thought to be the case, except possibly for FE colleges which might however impact on AE staff where there were greater similarities in provision but where possibly shorter hours made the expense more significant. Whilst some, such as NQTs may have already paid the fee, it was considered unlikely the majority of teachers would pay.

Committed expenditure on the staff development budget to date was £36,000 leaving £4000 from the allocated budget of £40,000 to help, along with frontloading, to cushion the cut in funding for the coming year to £21k. Upper Managers had recently considered how to prioritise demands on the reduced budget with greater responsibility to be put on HoFs to prioritise needs in their areas as well as the emphasis likely to shift to in-house provision. Teaching members expressed concern at any limitations on training to prepare for new specs in 2013 though this (but not the associated T&S) might be free if Board led.

7. Safeguarding Policy Update and Annual report

Paper: Safeguarding Policy and Learning Providers Annual Safeguarding Report

The Assistant Principal (Progress) explained the updates to the policy to reflect the end to the ISA and the proposal that the JSGCG's annual review of the policy would be done through the new annual report which would highlight any key changes required to the policy. Members were

content with this approach. The report showed the training undertaken over the past year as well as the number of cases of concern logged and referred with regard to student welfare.

[4.20pm Mr S.Martell left the meeting]

8. Pay Policy 2011

Papers: Pay Policy 2011

The Chair outlined the key aspects of the Pay Policy considered to-date by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The UNISON representative reported, on behalf also of the support staff representative, that she had received expressions of concern from a range of support staff including UNISON members. It was felt that the difference in treatment between teaching and support staff raised equality issues. It was also in danger of undermining both the policy's stated aim to provide adequately for the motivation of staff as support staff felt less valued and, as a result, the good working relationship between these two groups of staff. It was feared that the loss in motivation for support staff could be disproportionate to the sums saved. A request was therefore made to know how much this was calculated to be.

Members recognised that the policy was intended to help save jobs but expressed concern that the policy could cause real hardship if continued over a period of years particularly if there were rising inflation.

9. Staff (and Student) Surveys 2010-11

Paper: Results of Collyer's Staff (and Student) Surveys on Support Services 2010-11

The Director of Learning Resources (also the UNISON representative) explained that whilst the staff response rate had been slightly disappointing (even when including AE staff for the first time) and there was still some confusion in the grading, the 7 fold improvement in student response rate was impressive. Staff satisfaction levels were high and generally higher than in the previous year. Members noted particularly the conscientious response to the survey results from the MIS manager and acknowledged the improvements in 'My Progress'. With regard to the student response, members were surprised at the comments on the high cost of the canteen whilst noting also that many considered it cheaper than their school canteens. The IT Manager had found the comments on the IT facilities most useful in assessing areas for improvements in the coming year.

10. Premises Sub-committee Update

Paper: Minutes of the meeting held on 5th May 2011

The Chairman of the Governing Body reported that the Premises Sub-committee would be meeting again soon with a view to fulfilling a tight programme of improvements to the canteen and fire escape routes largely over the Summer break and with the benefit of a YPLA grant. The changes to the Food and Nutrition area would be completed simultaneously. It was hoped that the new rooflights had resolved the ventilation issues in the John Dew building although a member commented on the stuffiness of the corridors and apparent ongoing leaks in the roof of the bridge to the Rimbault building. The planned maintenance schedule was expected to address the painting issues raised in the student survey. The next priority the Committee would be seeking to address, possibly in a few years time, was enhancement and refurbishment of the older areas of the college including the heating and pipework.

11. Committee Annual Assessment of its Performance

Paper: Committee Annual Assessment of its Performance

The Group felt that their meetings considered a good balance of staff and student issues. Members thought it important that they communicated effectively with staff in considering agenda items and reporting on discussions and found the Clerk’s bulletin report helpful in this regard. New members would continue to benefit from a briefing on the role of the Group and the structure of Governing Body committees.

12. Date of the next meeting: (provisionally) Monday 7th November at 4.15p.m.

The Clerk explained the difficulty in continuing with Wednesday meetings once the timetable changes were introduced with internal meetings expected to occupy the slot. Current members bar one thought that Monday meetings after college would be an acceptable alternative. The Clerk would liaise with new members and the absent governor before confirming the best outcome of discussions.

Meeting ended at 4.45 p.m.

Chairman

Date

NCW 17/6/11