

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOSTON COLLEGE CORPORATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER 2011

1. PRESENT

Mr S McCracken (chair), Mrs L Ladds, Mr A Lascelles, Ms I Lebedowicz, Mrs A Mosek, Mr N Percy, Mr R Stanley, Mr B Walder and Mrs H Wright.

Also in attendance: Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), P Collins (Director of Business Development) Mrs F Grady (Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality) and Mr F Hanson (Equality & Diversity Manager) – Item 3 only.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Copley, Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Mr R Haynes, Mr T Huggins and Mr A Reynolds.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Members were advised that a staff election had taken place and that as a result Neil Percy was being proposed to serve the remainder of the term to which Becky Ward had been elected. Members confirmed approval of this appointment.

It was reported that the Search Committee had met and was recommending the appointment of two new members, Ladey Adey and John Woodward, both of whom were felt to have skills which would be valuable to the work of the Corporation. Members agreed that both of these members should be appointed for 1 year terms in the first instance.

It was further reported that the Search Committee was recommending the re-appointment of David Hanson and Tony Lascelles at the end of their existing terms of office on the basis of the contributions which they made to the work of the Corporation. Members agreed to these re-appointments for 4 year terms.

Ladey Adey joined the meeting at this point.

Members were advised of the resignation of Pam Smith from the Corporation. It was noted that Pam had made a very important contribution and acted as a role model to other governors and it was agreed that a letter of thanks and a bouquet of flowers should be sent to her as a gesture of thanks from the Corporation.

Members were advised that elections to student governors had not yet been completed.

A discussion took place about committee vacancies and it was agreed that both staff governors and both student governors when elected should serve on the Standards Committee and also an invitation should be issued for another member of Corporation to join the committee.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee was noted to be short of two members and it was agreed that invitations to join the committee should be extended to Corporation members.

3. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Members received a presentation from the College's Equality and Diversity Manager, Frank Hanson. It was noted that Equality and Diversity was particularly important as it was at present a limiting factor in inspections. Members were advised of the College's responsibilities on Equality and Diversity and the implications of legislation for the work of the College. Particular note was taken of the need to convey a positive message particularly in respect of potential conflict in the community on the subject of immigration. A discussion took place about the extension of discrimination legislation to cover discrimination by association and inference. Members found the presentation interesting and enlightening.

4. MINUTES

a) Meeting of the Corporation 6 July 2011

The minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 6 July 2011 having been circulated were agreed and signed as a correct record.

b) Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 28 July 2011

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 28 July 2011 were received.

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Members received a report from the Principal on a number of issues including the College's organisational structure, national policy and initiatives and College initiatives and activities.

The Principal advised members that Keith Tharby had been prevailed upon to stay on at the College and would be re-joining the Senior Leadership Team.

Derek White joined the meeting at this point.

Members noted the College's aspiration to extend the Higher Education offer and also noted the College's success in delivering the South Holland Festival.

A discussion took place about communications within the College and to governors. It was agreed that in future the staff newsletter should be circulated electronically to governors.

Members noted concern about the levels of 16-18 year old enrolments and how important it was to meet the student number target in this area. It was noted that the software was still not available to report on performance against the adult targets. A discussion took place about how choices are made by learners in the 16-18 age group.

6. **STRATEGIC PLAN**

Members received a report from the Principal on the new Strategic Plan and copies of the plan and the annual business plan were circulated to members. Members were supportive of the plan and in particular of the use of the word brilliant in the College's mission. It was agreed that a further discussion would take place about the implications of this.

7. **16-19 BURSARY FUND**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality on the arrangements for the new 16-19 Bursary Fund which was a replacement for the Education Maintenance Allowance. Members were advised that there was less money than the College had hoped for and funding was a lot less than would have been provided under the Education Maintenance Allowance. The College had worked with other colleges to produce a consistent scheme for local providers which included a fixed amount of financial support for the most vulnerable young people.

Members approved the guidance and procedures being proposed and noted that the College was encouraging applications to this fund.

8. **FINANCE REPORT**

Members received a report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on a number of financial matters:

a) **Financial Performance**

Members received the accounts and committee report from the last meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It was noted that the College was anticipating a deficit at the end of 2010-11 which was expected to be consistent with the figures in the financial forecast. A discussion took place about the performance of the Spalding operation and in particular a request was made that a revised business plan should be produced for the restaurant.

b) **Risk Management**

Information was provided on the College's Risk Management processes for 2010-11 and the Risk Register for 2011-12. Members noted the contents of the Risk Analysis.

c) **Bribery Policy**

Members were advised that the College was required to have a Bribery Policy following the passing of the Bribery Act and it was agreed that the draft policy presented should be adopted as the College's Bribery Policy. A discussion took place about how the College can monitor whether staff had received copies of policies of the College.

9. PROPERTY REPORT

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on the progress of the renewal grant work and the latest position in relation to leases. It was noted that the College was in dispute with the landlord regarding termination of a lease in Skegness shared with Grimsby Institute and that agreement had still not been reached on the lease for the Spalding property at Red Lion Street.

Members were advised that a new opportunity to bid for grant funding had been made available to the College with grants offered being similar to the ones where work was currently underway. The College had identified a number of options for developing the College's facilities including the purchasing of an adjacent site, Ingelow Manor. Members of the Corporation were advised of the indicative costs for such a purchase and the potential use to which this site may be put. Members agreed that this represented an outstanding opportunity for the College and it was agreed that this should be pursued.

The bid for grant funding was in the process of being put together and it was agreed that the Property Steering Group should come together to have a look at the bid before submission if possible. A discussion took place about the impact on liquidity of the proposed grant application and members agreed that a bid for a £3 million project, £2 million from the College plus £1 million grant funding should be submitted.

10. ACHIEVING OUTSTANDING GOVERNANCE AT BOSTON COLLEGE

Members received a report from the Principal on the aim of achieving recognition for outstanding governance. A discussion took place about governor aspirations and commitment and it was agreed that this matter should be explored further at an informal meeting.

Members were advised that the Governor Development day had been fixed for Friday 2 March 2012 and that this would possibly be a full day event with Sheila Selwood, Director of Governance at West Hertfordshire College, being invited to attend and lead the development.

11. GOVERNANCE

Members received a report from the Clerk to the Corporation on a number of governance issues:

a) Performance 2010-11

Members received information on the performance of the Corporation and most of its committees. It was noted that the Audit Committee's performance would be reported fully at the next meeting after the closure of the annual accounts.

b) Performance Targets 2011-12

Members considered potential targets for 2011-12 and agreed that these should be:

Corporation

Consideration was given to targets for 2011-12 for the Corporation, which it was agreed should reflect the College's targets and should include oversight of property development and monitoring of Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity and all governors undergoing training. It was agreed that these targets should be finalised after further discussion.

Finance and General Purposes

Members considered the targets to be suggested to the Corporation for 2011-12 and agreed that these should be:

- 80% attendance
- Monitoring of implementation of resolutions
- Making an annual report to the Corporation
- Monitoring property development
- Maintaining oversight of pension changes and implications
- Monitoring the timeliness of financial reporting.

Standards Committee

Members discussed targets for 2011-12 and agreed that the Committee should propose the following targets:

- 80% attendance
- Focus on Equality and Diversity by ensuring that it appears in the presentation of relevant reports
- Review the AS/A2 Quality Improvement Plan and Performance
- Monitor adult success rates

It was agreed that Audit Committee targets would be set at the next meeting.

c) Confidential papers

Members reviewed the confidential papers which had been presented to the Corporation during the year and agreed that the Finance and General Purposes Committee paper on Pay Awards in September 2010 and Property papers which had included costs and funding information should be released from confidentiality.

d) Decision Making processes

Members considered the arrangements of the Corporation for making decisions and agreed that the existing arrangements were appropriate and effective.

e) Governor Handbook

It was noted that work was in progress on the introduction of a governor handbook which would be presented to the Search Committee for consideration.

12. INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Members were advised that the College maybe affected by industrial action at the end of November in respect of disputes over potential pension changes in the public sector.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Corporation would take place on 14 December 2011.