

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION – LAKES COLLEGE, WEST CUMBRIA**

**Held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at 4:30pm in the Boardroom, Lakes College, West Cumbria**

*The meeting was preceded by a half hour presentation by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on New Funding Methodologies.*

**PRESENT:** Paul Pharaoh (Chair), Steve Bradley, Joe Holliday, John Lackie, Damian McSweeney, Cath Richardson (Principal), Eunice Simmons, Gerald Humes, Clare Hucknall, Michael Doyle, Adrian Taylor and Susie Shepherd (from 96/08).

**APOLOGIES:** Norma Boyes, Bill Southward, Mike Davidson and Cyril Wheat (Assistant Principal, External Relations).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Karen Wilson (Director of Finance and Corporate Services), Jo Lomax (Acting Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality) and Hilary Hemm (Clerk to the Governors). Two members of the public also attended the open session of the meeting.

### **90/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair reminded governors of the requirement to declare their interest in any agenda items. For any such declaration governors would not be eligible to speak or to vote on the matters under discussion or be counted in the quorum.

Steve Bradley declared an interest in that West Lakes Research Ltd was a contractor to Lakes College. Eunice Simmons declared an interest as an employee of the University of Cumbria and Paul Pharaoh declared an interest in that his firm provided legal services to the University of Cumbria. Michael Doyle declared an interest as a member of staff subject to the pay negotiations.

**RESOLVED that as items 91/08, 92/08 and 93/08 to be discussed next were due for publication at a later date the Board move in to confidential session.**

*The members of the public present left the room while these matters were discussed.*

*The members of the public present returned to the meeting.*

#### **94/08 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Board received the minutes of its meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed members that she had taken up the issue of risk assessment regarding staff vehicles referred to in min 88/08. Vehicle insurance is checked as a matter of course and plans were underway to update information on the roadworthiness of staff vehicles used for college business.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

#### **95/08 MINUTES OF SEARCH COMMITTEE held on 26<sup>th</sup> June and 4<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

The minutes of the Search Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> June and 4<sup>th</sup> August 2008 were received.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes and recommendations be received and further considered when dealing with membership update at 96/08 below.

#### **96/08 MEMBERSHIP AND COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The Search Committee Chair gave a verbal report on the meeting which had immediately preceded this Corporation meeting and on the current membership situation.

The Committee had been seeking to fill one vacancy with a member linked to local secondary schools. He was pleased to be able to report that Ms Susie Shepherd, Head of Solway Community Technology College, had applied to join the Board. The Committee had considered her background and skills and considered that she had great strengths which would enhance the Board's work. It was therefore recommended that she be appointed.

**RESOLVED** that Ms Susie Shepherd be appointed to the Lakes College Corporation as an independent member until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011.

*Ms Shepherd joined the meeting at this point and was welcomed and introduced to all present.*

The Search Committee Chair further reported that they were still seeking a new member with financial expertise. One possible candidate had been identified and others were being contacted. He would report further at the next meeting.

There were a number of committee vacancies. These would be dealt with later in the annual review of committee membership.

#### **97/08 EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

In the absence of the Assistant Principal, External Relations, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented his report.

As members had already learnt in the training session, funding was becoming increasingly complex to manage. The Sellafield contract was close to completion.

She noted that Assistant Principal, External Relations was temporarily running the College Company while the transition of Train to Gain funding worked its way through. She confirmed that ESF was the European Social Fund and that IES was Integrated Employment Skills. The ESF funding was with the college company and it was essential to have the company working strongly again.

To queries from members, she noted that any links with the new consortium due to run the Sellafield site were likely to be made through Energus. She understood that construction of Energus was to be completed in Spring 2009 with some commercial work being carried out before it took in its first intake of students in September 2009.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

#### **98/08 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY**

The Acting Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Quality, presented her report.

She took members through the various sections of her report, indicating that College had had a very successful year although she could not yet provide complete data for 2007/08. She referred to the indicative figures achieved. Some courses were under review and decisions would be made on these in the coming weeks. In response to a member's query it was agreed that the data for these be presented in a simpler form for the next meeting.

The learner survey had shown consistency over the past three years. She dealt with areas where the results had shown some reduction in student satisfaction and in response to members' queries, confirmed that College was addressing the issues highlighted. Responses to the employer satisfaction survey had improved. Summer School had been a great success overall.

Key Issues for 2008/09 were the significant changes in funding for 2008/09 and the knock-on effect that would have on delivery of the curriculum, which was more work-based. There would be major HR changes as a result. In addition, two assessment frameworks were becoming increasingly important – Framework for Excellence (FFE) and Training Quality Standards (TQS), and she provided members with details of both.

In summary she was pleased to be able to report on a good year. Members requested that staff be informed that the Corporation recognised this.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

#### **99/08 INVESTORS IN PEOPLE (IIP) RENEWAL**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the report on the reassessment which had been completed on 25<sup>th</sup> June and for which a verbal report had been provided at the last meeting. She repeated the assessor's approval of the Corporation strategic plan being linked to operational plans and down to individual plans. Members asked that all staff be thanked for their

part in the renewal of IIP and noted that the Principal in particular had played an important role in this.

The report was noted.

#### **100/08 HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

Mr J Holliday as the governor representative on this committee presented its annual report. He had been on this committee for 7 years and seen good progress over that period. Staff were to be congratulated on their performance and on much improved attendance at safety training sessions for first aid and fire.

In response to a member's query, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services confirmed that the number of RIDDORS and minor accidents was tracked by Resources Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

#### **101/08 RAISING EXPECTATIONS (MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT CHANGES)**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented her report which updated members on the Raising Expectations consultation and implementation process. There had been local concern about the complexity of the proposals which include the dissolution of the LSC and transfer of funding for 14 – 19 to the local authority. There had also been concern on the capacity of local authorities to deal with these changes and over the long transition period.

She understood that Cumbria County Council was to respond to consultation by seeking to work as one authority with 5 working clusters. A direct impact now of these changes was that local partner staff from the LSC had been seconded into the transition team.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

#### **102/08 DRAFT ANNUAL REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2008/09**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services referred to members' discussion at the summer meeting. The final LSC allocation had been higher than anticipated, as indicated in her report. However, for the reasons stated in her report it had been decided not to review the college budget and she did not anticipate any major change in the final figures for the year.

At this stage she sought members' approval to the release of £107,000 capital for the projects listed in her report.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of her report be noted and that the capital investment of £107,000 in 2008/09 as detailed in the report be approved.

### **103/08 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE UPDATE**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented members with the provisional out-turn for 2007/08.

She anticipated a surplus of approximately £0.5m and that the College would be graded as Grade A – strong financially. External consultants had assessed the financial plans and financial status as “robust”.

The pension fund liability accounting adjustment (FRS 17) may be adversely affected by the “credit crunch” effect and this would be dealt with in her end of year report presented to the December meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

### **104/08 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented members with her report. The College had approximately £2.5m held in bank accounts on that day. She had held discussions with the College bankers the previous day to ensure that money deposits were secure, bearing in mind the major changes which had occurred in the banking industry in the past week. She would report to members on any new proposals in due course.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

### **105/08 UPDATE ON ANNUAL PAY AWARD**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that the situation had not changed since the report had been prepared – that is, that the AoC final offer was for an increase of 3.2% on all salaries or of £550, whichever was the greater, payable from 1<sup>st</sup> October. Unison had accepted this but UCU had not yet responded. The College would like to pay this to staff before Christmas and she sought approval for this. She also sought approval for payment of the bonuses outlined in the report.

In response to members’ queries, she stated that last year College had paid the offered pay increase before it had been formally accepted and that in fact one union had never formally accepted it. The proposed bonus was a one-off payment which was within the pay budget figures and which would not affect future years’ pay. It would be paid on a pro rata basis for those working part time or joining the College during the year. While there may be some perceived unfairness when a specific cut-off date was imposed, the aim was to be as fair as possible but it was important that the scheme was easy to administer.

**RESOLVED** that the pay increase of 3.2% be approved and paid from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 notwithstanding the lack of response to date from the UCU.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that payment of the bonus as outlined in the Personnel Manager’s report be approved.

*Eunice Simmons left the meeting*

## **106/08 COLLEGE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2007/08 – FINAL REPORT**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented these indicators. There were some minor discrepancies in the Corporation attendance figures caused by changing the way in which data was being collected. This would not occur in the coming year.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

## **107/08 FRAMEWORK FOR EXCELLENCE**

The Acting Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Quality, presented her report on this initiative. She set out the various dimensions of the Framework and the work required from College staff in order to comply with it.

**RESOLVED** that the report be received and the contents noted.

## **108/08 CORPORATION SELF ASSESSMENT AND GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN 2008 / 09 AND CORPORATION KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Clerk presented members with an Action Plan which had been drawn up as a result of the self-assessment questionnaire results and the discussions held during the self-assessment workshops in June. As requested a traffic light system had been inserted in the plan.

In response to a query she confirmed that members had sought more input into curriculum and quality matters and that was why a review of committee remits and the possibility of a “Learner Experience” committee was referred to in the Action Plan. This would be part of the proposed review of Standing Orders to be discussed later in the meeting.

The Corporation Key Performance Indicators were part of the College KPIs.

**RESOLVED** that the Governance Action Plan 2008/09 be approved.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Governance Key Performance Indicators forming part of the College KPIs for 2008/09 also be approved.

## **108/08 CORPORATION TRAINING PLAN**

The Clerk presented her report on the outcome of the self-assessment feedback and questionnaire and sought a steer from members on how they wished to prioritise their training needs and on how they wished the training to be provided. After some discussion it was agreed that the 30 mins slot before Corporation meetings had worked well at this meeting and could be used again. In addition, members agreed to attend a “twilight” session from 5 -7 ending at 7pm with a working supper, to be arranged early in the New Year and to include one or more topics from the training list – the Clerk to arrange the most suitable.

Members had also recognised the need for all to keep their knowledge of the College activities up to date by having a tour of the college at regular intervals.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk arrange a twilight training session early in 2009 in addition to the session already scheduled for December 2008 and to investigate the possibility of further 30 mins slots prior to main meetings.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that members be reminded of the opportunity they have to go round all or part of the college at any mutually convenient time.

#### **109/08 REVIEW OF CORPORATION MEMBERS ATTENDANCE RECORD 2007/08**

Members were presented by the Clerk with a table of governors' attendance for 2007/08. The Search Committee had already considered the records and found them to be satisfactory.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

#### **110/08 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER ROLES**

The Clerk presented members with a list of all current committee membership and other roles carried out by members. Joe Holliday should be added as a representative at ActivZone.

There were vacancies on a number of committees, the most urgent to fill being those on the Remuneration committee. As it was not possible to fill these at the meeting,

**RESOLVED** that that the Chair and Vice Chair be authorised to nominate two governors to join the Remuneration Committee and that, on this occasion, clause 14 of Reservations to the Corporation contained in the Procedural Rules be suspended. Other vacancies to be left until after the anticipated review of Governance papers.

#### **111/08 REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS**

The Clerk presented her report which carried the Search Committee's recommendation that its title be changed to "Search and Governance Committee" and that its Terms of Reference be changed in accordance with the model appended to her report. In addition she recommended that there be a complete review of governance documents later in the term by a small group of members appointed to the task.

**RESOLVED** that the Title and Terms of Reference of the Search Committee be changed in accordance with the Clerk's recommendations.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that a group comprising the Chair, Vice Chair, John Lackie and Steve Bradley meet later in the term to review the Governance documents and various committees.

#### **112/08 CLERK'S APPRAISAL**

The Chair referred members to the detailed appraisal report which had been circulated.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7:20pm