



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

**Held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2008 at 4:30pm in the Boardroom, Lakes College, West Cumbria**

**PRESENT:** Paul Pharaoh, Neil Smart, Steve Bradley, Mike Davidson, Joe Holliday, Carole Carre, Robert Walker, John Lackie, Damian McSweeney, William Southward, Norma Boyes, Cath Richardson, Eunice Simmons, Gerald Humes, Michael Doyle, Clare Hucknall, Adrian Taylor (from 49/08) and Mau Craze-Gray (formerly known as Clare Gray).

**APOLOGIES:** Graham Kennedy and Pippa Tiller (Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Quality)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Karen Wilson (Director of Finance and Corporate Services), Cyril Wheat (Assistant Principal, External Relations), Graham Johnson (Head of Faculty, ECT, for item 55/08) and Hilary Hemm (Clerk to the Governors)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and before moving on to the main business of the day referred to his statement regarding the changed date of the meeting, which had been circulated with agenda minutes. It set out an explanation of why, due to an exceptionally early Easter, this meeting was being held at the start of the summer term rather than the end of the Spring term, thus putting the Corporation in technical breach of the requirement to hold a meeting in every College term. His comments were noted.

*Joe Holliday declared an interest in Item 15 on the agenda – IT Dept, in that his grandson was a student on the course. It was noted on behalf of Adrian Taylor, who joined the meeting at Item 49 /08, that he was a student on the IT course. Steve Bradley declared an interest in that West Lakes Research Ltd had become a contractor of Lakes College. Neil Smart declared an interest in that the collaboration discussions involved the NDA.*

### **44/08 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Board received the minutes of its meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

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

### **45/08 MINUTES OF SEARCH COMMITTEE held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

The minutes of the Search Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 were presented by the Committee Chair.



**RESOLVED** that the Minutes and recommendations be received and further considered when dealing with membership update at 48/08 below.

**46/08 MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

The minutes of the Audit Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008 were presented by the respective Committee Chairs and received.

**47/08 MINUTES OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

The minutes of the Resources Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008 were received.

**48/08 MEMBERSHIP AND COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Damian McSweeney as Search Committee Chair gave a verbal report on the meeting which had immediately preceded this Corporation meeting. A new nomination had been sought from Western Heads group to ensure continued contact with local secondary schools but at present the Committee was not in a position to make a recommendation on this vacancy.

Adrian Taylor had been elected by his fellow course reps as a student governor and it was recommended that like Mau Craze-Gray he serve a term until 31st August 2008, the end of the academic year.

The result of these changes and of the change in Chairmanship at the last meeting was that a number of committee places needed to be revised. Paul Pharaoh would now sit on the Resources committee, Damian McSweeney on Audit, Remuneration and Search committees and Neil Smart had offered to serve on Audit committee. That meant there were still vacancies on Resources and Search committees. Gerald Humes offered to serve on Resources committee. Paul Pharaoh indicated that the remaining Search committee vacancy would be followed up after the meeting.

Carole Carre then indicated that she would be resigning from the Corporation with effect from June 2008 and that, while she could attend the Audit committee in May, she would not be able to attend the Corporation away day and meeting in June.

The Chair sought expressions of interest for membership of the Corporation from other interested individuals (through current members), especially from those with financial and accountancy qualifications.



**RESOLVED** that the recommendation be accepted that Adrian Taylor be appointed as student governor until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008 and that the candidates for the remaining vacancy be pursued.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the committee membership be adjusted as set out above with a further member to be appointed to Search committee.

*Adrian Taylor joined the meeting and was welcomed by the Chair on behalf of the Board.*

#### **49/08 REPORT ON CEL ANNUAL GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE, 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

Paul Pharaoh presented his report of his attendance at this event. He noted that it was of benefit to the College to be represented and to be seen to have a presence at this event, which was growing in strength and value to the sector.

#### **50/08 COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN 2008 - 2011**

The Principal took members through the main points of the Strategic Plan. It had been developed as a result of work between the Executive, Strategic and Management teams and with close reference to the college performance indicators. The college vision was new and she explained how the aims and goals were set out in the plan. In response to members' queries she explained that the objectives would be measured against college performance indicators and that certain targets had been set for each year. She confirmed that full Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) would be provided to the next meeting. There were different age groups referred to for differing targets; this was due to different funding criteria for different groups. The next step was to publish and adopt the plan. It would be reviewed annually. She also confirmed that there had been partnership working with local schools on the 14-16 age group targets, and referral to the LEA plans.

**RESOLVED** that the Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011 be approved.

#### **51/08 OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

The Principal presented members with an update on progress on the Options Appraisal project. Prior to going through her report she informed members that there had been press enquiries during the day about the project and the stage reached. She confirmed that a joint statement would be issued on behalf of all four colleges.

On the Options Appraisal itself, all four Principals, Chairs and Vice-Chairs had met in February. Their next meeting was due to take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> May at Lakes College. The second phase of the appraisal should have been completed by



Easter. However, due to the withdrawal of the main consultant there had been limited progress on behalf of the LSC.

The Chair noted that the Chair of Corporation for Kendal College had reported his discussions with the LSC and that the Kendal Chair was seeking a stronger, more effective and self-driven collaboration between the four colleges, not one forced upon them. Paul Pharaoh endorsed that view. The Principals would be selecting and “driving” the areas for collaboration and the Principal confirmed that there are currently around 10 groups working on different areas, with the Lakes College Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs and the Assistant Principal, External Relations both chairing groups. Targets for collaborative working had been identified and there would be a further round of meetings on 9<sup>th</sup> May. It was proposed that there be a monitoring group made up of Corporation members from all four Corporations. An appropriate form of partnership agreement was being investigated. The Chair expressed the view that there should be governor involvement.

To enquiries from members, the Principal confirmed that this collaboration was different from the current informal arrangements, that it involved sharing expertise, burdens and costs and would be placed on a more formal basis than previous arrangements. The only formal arrangements up to now were the activities of Cumbria Colleges Ltd and these were restricted in nature.

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

## **52/08 LILLYHALL CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT**

The Principal presented members with her report on progress made by the Steering Group for the Lillyhall Campus. As a result of the University of Cumbria now indicating an intention to have a presence at Lakes College, there was the possibility of enhancement and an upgrading of College facilities. She considered it was likely that the Nuclear Academy would contain the facilities for more advanced education in some areas.

To queries from members, she confirmed that she hoped to see a balancing of the engineering and energy courses with arts being included in future College activities. She confirmed that there was still sufficient room capacity at the College and that it would be reviewed as future needs developed. It was likely that the various zones within the LRC would be reviewed.

She undertook to follow up a suggestion that College premises could be used for OU Summer School events. She confirmed that working with the Nuclear Academy and the University of Cumbria was the way forward, that the University was still in the process of planning its activities in West Cumbria and that there may well be courses run county-wide from one base but with students attending many venues round the county. It was hoped that some Lakes College staff would be involved in this.

Mike Davidson, as representative of Allerdale Borough Council, indicated that he would report the inclusion of planning for residential and leisure accommodation back to his own authority since it too was considering future provision for these.



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

#### **53/08 OFSTED ANNUAL MONITORING VISIT**

The Principal reported to members on this visit, which was due to take place on 21<sup>st</sup> April. The last Inspection and annual visit had shown the College to be “good and improving”. As the overall average grade for the College had been assessed as just short of a grade 2, then the regulations dictated that there had to be annual inspections in the intervening period before the next inspection. The LSC had already given a positive report and she would report to the next meeting on the outcome of the Inspection.

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

#### **54/08 CHANGES TO THE MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT**

The Principal had circulated a copy of a paper issued by DIUS entitled “Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver”. Also included in her report were details of the new funding arrangements whereby LEAs were to assume responsibility for commissioning and funding education and training for 16–18 yr olds. She also circulated to the meeting a flow chart produced by the AoC (Association of Colleges) which indicated that in 2010 FE College funding would be coming from 7 different sources. She expressed concern about this complexity, the lack of knowledge at LEA level of this type of funding (as LSC had had control of it for a number of years) and the fact that there would be less certainty for 16–18 funding in future. Consultation on the proposed funding arrangements ran until June and it was to be hoped that some of the complexities would be removed as a result of feedback.

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

#### **55/08 SPECIAL MEASURES FOR COMPUTING SECTION**

*Members Joe Holliday and Adrian Taylor left the meeting during discussion of this item.*

In the absence of the Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality, Graham Johnson, Head of Faculty ECT, joined the meeting in order to present this report. He reminded members that this section had been placed in Special Measures and awarded a grade 4 because he had not been able to guarantee good delivery of the courses. Since the last report to members in December two members of staff had left. The remaining three staff were committed and working hard to provide a quality product. While there were still issues, he did not anticipate this section self-assessing at Grade 4 again. He outlined his five recommendations which included removal of the Special Measures but instead placing the section under “Close monitoring” for a two year period, thus enabling



IT to remain on the curriculum for 2008/09 but with close supervision of the section's work. The current proposal to keep the section open would have no impact on current students. He also set out proposals to change the focus of courses offered in order to meet employer and student needs. In answer to members' queries about staffing levels, he confirmed that the section was coping with 3+ members of staff but that recruitment of another member of staff would allow greater flexibility in provision. The Assistant Principal, External Relations confirmed that he anticipated more external requests for IT so that the section could expand.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted, the recommendations be accepted including the removal of Special Measures and placing the section in Closer Monitoring for a two year period. It was further resolved that this section be reviewed regularly by the Corporation and on an annual basis.

#### **56/08 COLLEGE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, 2007/2008**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented her report. She informed members that College was meeting many more targets and took members through the areas highlighted as "amber" or "red". Although College was under target for this year's non-LSC work, she was optimistic that ground work done this year on employer engagement would result in much more work next year. Work based Learning (WBL) figures were monitored monthly and she had no concerns for end of year figures. The Principal informed members that College turnover was predicted to grow by approximately £1.4m this year. In response to a member's query regarding RIDDOR reportable accidents she outlined the manner of setting targets for such incidents in FE and the particular incidents which had occurred, which had been reviewed by Resources committee. The Principal reminded members that College runs theme weeks which aim to raise awareness of risks and so on.

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

#### **57/08 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE UPDATE**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented her report on the management accounts to the end of February 2008 and an update on financial performance to date together with the forecast position for the end of the year. She reported that the College's position was very healthy. Income was slightly down but the potential slight drop in income against targets was offset by the lower salary figure than projected. The balance sheet was very strong and College was in a good position to deal with any planned developments such as the covered area in the Construction unit and also working with the UoC. She informed members that the LSC now considered the College to have grade A status and she anticipated a formal grading at that level at the year end.



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

#### **58/08 2008/09 CAPITAL BUDGET**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented her report and sought approval for the first stage of the 2008/09 capital programme. She explained that she had brought this paper forward from June in order to assist with effective planning and management of project spending. She had set out a table of items for which she sought approval now, together with items on which she would be seeking approval at a later stage. The later stage plans were dependant on release of funds from the LSC.

In response to members' queries, she confirmed that any workshop hand tools considered "dangerous" were taken out of use and replaced as required. She also confirmed that she is working in collaboration with the other three colleges on shared services and joint purchases in order to obtain best value in procurement. She was also in discussion with Allerdale Borough Council regarding some joint procurement and services.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted, that the capital budget for 2008/09 of £303,000 be approved, that the additional release of capital funds be reviewed in December 2008 and that the shift to direct investment in ICT resources in 2009/10 be supported.

#### **59/08 DISPOSAL OF LAND**

The Clerk reported on the requirement for the Corporation to approve the disposal of a strip of Corporation land which had been verge fronting on to the A595 and which was the subject of a compulsory purchase order by the Highways Agency. The small area of land was part of the A595 Distington bypass works. Its value had been assessed at £1,500 plus a sum of £150 for basic loss and occupier's loss. Its disposal would have no effect on College activities. LSC had been informed. Resources Committee had already considered it and recommended the disposal for approval.

**RESOLVED** that the disposal of the strip of land fronting the A595 be approved on the terms set out.

#### **60/08 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY REPORT**

In the absence of the Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Quality, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented a summary of her report to members. She touched on several highlights in her report. 78% of teaching and learning observations had led to gradings of outstanding or satisfactory. Course reps were becoming more active in their meetings with management and Clare Hucknall had been very active in her role of liaison with students. In response to



members' comments, it was accepted that some student representation could be better and that College would work on ways to improve all student representation next year. Student questionnaires had in general produced good responses and showed a slight improvement on last year. The whole-staff equality and diversity day last term had been well attended and a success.

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

#### **61/08 EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

The Assistant Principal, External Relations spoke to his paper to inform the Corporation on activities and progress to date this year. He reported on the disappointing news regarding some Work Based Learning funding being withdrawn by the LSC and the reasons for it. Level 2 Engineering cannot be clawed back in the present cycle of funding although Lakes College still had funding for Levels 1 and 3. It was possible that Lakes would work collaboratively with another college to ensure students could progress through all levels. No current students would suffer as a result of the withdrawal of funds as all would complete their current courses before the LSC's end date. There was positive news in that LSC was providing new funding in other areas as detailed in his report. The closure of Carter and Carter had resulted in Newcastle College seeking business in Cumbria. It was important for Lakes College to be aware of, and deal with, this new competition.

Unfortunately due to pressures of time on the meeting, it was not possible to discuss some aspects of this report in as much detail as members would have liked. The report of the Assistant Principal, External Relations therefore to be placed higher on the next agenda in order to allow sufficient time for a full review of the position.

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

#### **62/08 NEW INSTRUMENT AND ARTICLES OF GOVERNMENT**

The Clerk set out for members the changes to the Instrument and Articles of Government which had come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 and which were listed in her report. She sought approval for the Action Plan and for the consequent amendments required to the College Standing Orders in order to comply with the new Instrument and Articles. The only outstanding matters now were the review of grievance and disciplinary policies and publication of certain information on the College website.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted, that the Action Plan, including publication of information on the College website, be approved and that the proposed changes to the College Standing Orders be approved.



#### **63/08 RISK REGISTER REVIEW**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services gave details of the review, of matters which had been to Audit and Resources Committees and of the progress on actions being taken as set out in her report.

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

#### **64/08 REVIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS**

The Clerk reminded members that they were obliged to carry out a review of confidential papers once a year. This review was for the year 2006/07. She had set out the details of papers involved in her report (Remuneration Committee minutes 14th December 2006) and of the arguments for and against releasing these papers. After some discussion it was agreed that in view of the time which had elapsed and of Freedom of Information Act requirements, the papers be released and made available for public inspection but that Remuneration Committee minutes should not be published on the College website. Any release of such papers should only be on receipt of a proper enquiry.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted, that the Remuneration Committee minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> December 2006 be released from confidentiality and made available for public inspection on receipt of a proper enquiry only and that Remuneration Committee minutes should not be published on the College website.

#### **65/08 GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN 2007 / 08**

The Clerk outlined in brief that progress had been made on this plan and that further work would be done at the Corporation Away day and meeting in June 2008.

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

#### **66/08 MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2008/09**

The Clerk had prepared a draft schedule of meetings for 2008/09 based on the current year's pattern of meetings. She had noted all college holidays on the list.

**RESOLVED** that the schedule of meetings for 2008/09 be noted and approved.



**67/08 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

It was noted that since papers for this meeting had been circulated, the NUT and UCU unions had called a strike for Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April in furtherance of their dispute over pay. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that College has 61 members of staff who are union members. Numbers planning to take industrial action were not yet known. Contingency plans were in place for learners and arrangements were in place to ensure that any lost learning time would be replaced.

The meeting closed at 6:25pm