

**Minutes of the Full Corporation meeting held on
11 February 2010**

10.01 Membership

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| Ms P Beasant | Ms C Millard |
| Mr J Connolly | Mr T Ndlovu |
| Mrs L Coombes | Ap Ms D Needham |
| Mr S Darby | Ms A Neilson (Vice Chair) |
| Ap Mr K Green | Cllr D Pressley |
| Ap Mr R Holden | Ap Mr R Rowley |
| Mr M Lloyd | Mr J Sephton (Chair) |
| Ap Mr K McKoy | Ms K Body |
| | Ap Mr A Stott |

In attendance:

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| Mr M E Murphy | (Clerk to the Corporation) |
| Ms J Dallinson | (PA to the Principal) |
| Mr J Neal | (Assistant Principal) |
| Mr G Adams | (Director of Finance & Resources) |
| Mrs C Godfrey | (Curriculum Director) Up to Minute 10.02 |

10.02 Briefing from the Curriculum Director

Claire Godfrey, Curriculum Director for Business School, was welcomed to the meeting. Mrs Godfrey presented a report to the Corporation summarising performance in the Subject Sector Areas of Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy, Business, Office and Information Technology, and Sport, Catering and Airport Operations. From September 09 Retford College was also included under the directorate.

The validated data for the key SSAs was summarised. Information and Communication Technology had been graded a 3 at Self Assessment 2008/9 and although had shown improvements over the 3 year trend, had not met the college target of 87%. Retail and Commercial Enterprise had maintained above 80% and was graded a 2 whilst Leisure, Travel and Tourism was slightly below benchmark. A slight increase was shown in Business, Admin and Law, however no significant improvements in this area.

SSA 8 success rate data for 16-18 was good at levels 1 and 2 however was currently 1% behind the national average due to the level 3 sports science provision at Retford Post 16 Centre. This was now being addressed and only the higher level academic students were attending the Centre. SSA 6 had remained quite static over the last few years, on or below the national average. More rigorous measures had been put in place to address issues at an early stage such as performance monitoring, and exam based courses had moved to on-line exams, which would allow for re-takes where necessary.

The Chair thanked Mrs Godfrey for this report. Mrs Godfrey left the meeting.

10.03 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Green, Mr Holden, Mr McKoy, Ms Needham and Ms Oaks.

The Chair reflected on the sad news of the death of Mrs Chambers. The college wished to commemorate Joy in recognition of her hard work and commitment as a member of the Governing Body for the last 12 years.

Ms Body was welcomed to her first meeting as Staff Governor.

An additional item of business would be considered relating to the annual funding allocation (10.08.01).

10.04 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Pressley declared an interest (Minute 10.09) as a member of UNISON.
Ms Beasant and Ms Body declared an interest (Minute 10.9) as members of staff.
Ms Millard declared an interest (Minute 10.15) as a member of the Student Union.

10.05 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2009

The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

10.06 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

10.07 Appointment of Mr R Holden to the Audit Committee

Following the end of Mr Savage's term of office, Mr Holden had been approached with regard to filling the vacancy on the Audit Committee.

RESOLVED 10.07.01 To appoint Mr Holden to the Audit Committee with immediate effect

10.08 Amendment to the Financial Regulations

In accordance with current Financial Regulations two quotations were required on all purchase orders between £251 and £2,500. It was proposed that this minimum figure be increased to £501, which would significantly reduce the admin burden involved in the process.

RESOLVED 10.08.01 To approve the revisions to the Financial Regulations to remove the requirement for alternative quotations for orders with a value between £251 and £500

10.08.01 Annual Funding Allocations

The Principal updated Governors on the current position with regard to funding for 2010/11. Initial allocations had now been received for Adult Learner Responsive and for 16-18, which formed the bulk of mainstream provision. ALR provision had faced increasing pressures nationally for a number of years and as a result participation had reduced from 5,000 in 2007/8 to 1,000 for 2010/11. E2E and WBL had been given slightly higher allocations than the previous year. The additional £200,000 awarded for Train to Gain in 2009/10 had fallen outside the allocation process for this year, however strong representation was being made to the LSC. Notification of ALS funding was still awaited.

Mr Connolly recognised the significant pressures on funding bodies nationally, but the SFA and YPLA were considering business cases put forward over the next few weeks and some further improvement was hoped for.

The Vice Chair asked for clarification of the criteria for granting additional funding to Colleges and if it related to the College's performance. The Principal explained that a business case would only be put forward if it was sound and met the criteria as this was more likely to receive a positive response. With regard to 16-18 funding, the college met all three criteria applied to requests for additional allocations, these being reducing NEET numbers, track record of good success rates or significant improvement trend, and confidence in delivering targets.

In response to Governors suggestions to developing a contingency plan, the Principal stated that he anticipated receiving further information in the next 3-4 weeks that would enable decisions to be taken in relation to budgets.

10.09 Job Evaluation and Pay Award

Governors had requested further information at the last meeting, particularly in relation to costs associated with implementation of JE and a pay award. Positive dialogue continued with the Regional UNISON Officer and local reps in order to obtain a better understanding of their views on JE and to ensure that information presented to Governors is an accurate reflection of their views.

The Principal explained that the Regional Officer of UNISON, Mike Scott, was the only remaining FE officer within the Union and he had given a commitment to ensure all colleges in Nottinghamshire completed the JE process. Mr Scott's view was that Governors do not have any alternative on the matter. If JE is not implemented UNISON would actively pursue cases of equal pay through Employment Tribunals.

The cost of undertaking the process was reported to be between £50,000 and £100,000. Advice from other colleges who had undertaken JE indicated that implementation costs would equate to approximately 1.5% of payroll. UNISON were prepared to be flexible with regard to structuring the process and felt costs of implementing would be minimal as it mostly concerned lower paid employees. Following questions from Governors on the costs involved, it was confirmed that whilst approximately 60 Colleges had bought the software, few of them had implemented JE in full. The Principal added that the cost of the software compared well to other systems in College and because it was user specific was not over expensive.

Governors recognised UNISON's position and reinforced their commitment to implementing JE if affordable. The Principal was challenged to consider the best way to undertake the process and to give consideration within budget setting for 2010/11 as to how this might be made affordable.

RESOLVED 10.09.01 That the Principal continue to meet with UNISON in order to agree a way forward.

RESOLVED 10.09.02 That the Principal consider the affordability of JE within the budget setting process for 2010/11.

Since the last meeting of the Full Corporation, UCU had accepted the 1.5% pay award offered by the AoC, therefore agreement had now been reached across all Unions. Governors were asked to give further consideration to implementation based on affordability. Mr Adams commented that costs associated with implementation of a pay award had not been built into the financial forecast, and that implementing it in full would impact significantly on the College's financial position. It was possible that alternative options could be considered, and suggestions were made in respect of this, including phased implementation or increasing holiday entitlement.

The Principal commented that until such time as the funding allocation and outturn for the current academic year was confirmed, he would prefer to defer any decisions on affordability.

RESOLVED 10.09.04 **That affordability of a pay award be considered further at the next Full Corporation meeting in April 2010.**

10.10 Annual Report: Equality and Diversity

Mr Neal presented the report in the absence of the Deputy Principal. Following the departure of the Equality and Diversity Champion in July 2009, Matt Vaughan, Curriculum Director, had taken over as Chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee, which reports to the Management Group. To date 156 members of staff had attended equality and diversity training sessions and 198 staff had completed an online tutorial package. Success data for students was now reviewed at a more detailed level by SMT and Programme Managers. Headline analysis indicated that students who receive ALS support achieve at the same level as other students. The issue of poor success rates for males aged 19+ in Construction and Engineering was being addressed through fortnightly performance meetings.

The report was noted and received.

10.11 Annual Report: Safeguarding

The annual report aimed to provide sufficient evidence for Governors to consider satisfactory discharge of their responsibilities for safeguarding. The Principal provided assurance that all matters had been dealt with professionally and sensitively and that any referrals were made appropriately. Governors would have the opportunity to raise any particular issues or concerns during the training event on 6th March 2010, which would consider further developments in reporting of safeguarding.

The report was noted and received.

10.12 Annual Review of Confidential Matters

In accordance with the general policy of the Corporation and in accordance with the Instruments and Articles of Government and Freedom of Information, a review of all matters deemed confidential during 2009 had been undertaken. Recommendations had been made as to items which should remain confidential and matters which should be reclassified as non confidential and therefore brought in to the public domain.

RESOLVED 10.12.01 **That minutes indicated be reclassified as no longer confidential.**

RESOLVED 10.12.02 **That reports indicated be reclassified as no longer confidential.**

10.13 Performance Monitoring: Quality Data

Mr Neal introduced the reports for January and February 2010 in the absence of the Deputy Principal. The reports indicated improving trends in retention; areas of concern were being monitored more regularly by the senior team. 57 lesson observations had been carried out to date, of which only one was awarded a grade 4. The new Learner Voice methodology of face-to-face discussions was proving effective for canvassing views. Governors commented on access to the VLE by students and whether it was standardised, to which Mr Neal advised that whilst it varied, it was the intention to develop a standard for all programme areas.

The report was noted and received.

10.14 Principal's Report

The Principal referred to the outstanding issue relating to membership of the Board of 'Directions Finningley'. A request had been received from Yorkshire Forward that the college should resign its membership of the Community Interest Company. After a lengthy discussion with the Executive Director of Finance of Yorkshire Forward it still remained unclear what the company were aiming to achieve, however it was agreed there would be no value in resisting the request.

RESOLVED 10.14.01 That the college should formally resign its membership of Directions Finningley CIC, as requested by Yorkshire Forward.

The Principal updated Governors on strategic developments including opportunities for expansion into high tech low carbon industries emerging from the BIS Skills Strategy – New Industries New Jobs. This generated much discussion on recent developments. The Principal confirmed that the College continued to work closely with Lang O'Rourke and had been involved in their start-up recruitment. In respect of wind turbines it was noted that the NFPC was looking to expand in to maintenance in this growing area and had joined the British Wind Energy Association.

An 'Open Space' event had taken place on 25 January and the subsequent report had been made available. Feedback from the event had been extremely positive. The report was now being analysed and prioritised in order to respond to issues raised and implement recommendations where possible. Ms Body commented favourably on the event, stating that it allowed staff to express how they felt and to give their views on the future of the College.

In light of the recently received funding allocations, Governors were asked to reconsider costs associated with holding the Governors Development Event at an external venue. The Principal proposed holding the event in the NFPC Conference Suite as an alternative. Overnight accommodation and travel costs would be borne by the College where necessary, but the overall costs would be significantly reduced.

RESOLVED 10.14.02 That the Principal produce a programme for the development event 5/6 March and circulate to Governors.

10.15 Audited Accounts of the North Nottinghamshire College Student Union

The Financial Statements of the NNC Student Union for year ended 31 July 2009 were presented. Mr Adams assured Governors that appropriate controls had been put in place in order to ensure accurate recording of transactions and handling of cash.

The accounts were noted and received.

10.16 Minutes of the Audit Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2009 were agreed as a true and accurate record. It was agreed that matters relating to Minute 09.46 should be classed as confidential. Separate Minutes were produced in relation to this item.

10.17 Equality and Diversity

The issue of under performing 19+ white males had been identified and was being addressed.

10.18 Governance Risk

Governors recognised the impact of reduced funding allocations and awaited an update on the funding position for 2010/11 and outturn for 2009/10 in due course.

Governors noted that any amounts owed to H M Revenue and Customs by Retford College should be recoverable under the warranties from the previous owners.

10.19 Confidentiality

10.19.1

It was agreed that in accordance with Instrument 17 (2) (d), discussion relating to the funding allocations should remain confidential until further clarity was received.

10.19.2

In accordance with Instrument 17 (2) (d) it was agreed that part of Minute 10.16 relating to confidential matters dealt with at the Audit Committee meeting on 1 December 2009 be classed as confidential.

10.20 Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 15 April 2010 at 6.15 pm.

Signed _____ Chairman

Date _____