

# BOSTON COLLEGE

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOSTON COLLEGE CORPORATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2006

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### 1. PRESENT

Mr P Cropley (chair), Mr C Baron, Ms S Daley, Mr M Gallagher, Mr R Haynes, Mrs L Ladds, Mr T Lightfoot, Mr S McCracken, Mr A Reynolds, Mrs P Smith, Mrs B Ward, Mr D White, Revd R Whitehead and Mrs H Wright.

Also in attendance Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mr J Allison-Maybank (Director of Client Services), Mr C Bradford (Deputy Principal), Mr P Collins (Director of Business Development), Mr J Rees (Director of Performance and Standards), Mr K Tharby (Director of Human Resources) and Mr Alan Gunne-Jones (Tribal).

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

The Clerk to the Corporation advised members that students of the College had nominated Nicola Clements as the student governor for 2006-07. This appointment was confirmed by the governing body.

Members were further informed that the Search Committee recommended that Mr Tony Lascelles should be reappointed as Local Authority Member of the Corporation. The committee was recommended that this should be a one-year appointment in the first instances. Members of the Corporation accepted the recommendations of the Search Committee.

Ms Clements and Mr Lascelles joined the meeting.

### 3. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

#### a) Meeting of the Corporation 11 October 2006

The Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 12 October 2006, having been circulated were agreed subject to the addition of Mr Gallagher to the list of those sending apologies to the meeting and was signed as a correct record.

#### b) Meeting of the Audit Committee 6 July 2006

The Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 6 July 2006, were received and accepted.

c) Meeting of the Audit Committee 17 November 2006

The Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 17 November 2006 were received and accepted.

The Audit Committee had noted an issue about the presentation of the accounts which had now been resolved.

d) Finance & General Purposes Committee 20 November 2006

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20 November 2006 were received and accepted.

e) Search Committee 20 November 2006

The Minutes of the meeting of the Search Committee held on 20 November 2006 were received and accepted.

Members were advised that the Search Committee was recommending that Mr White and Mr Cropley should be reappointed as Business Members for further four-year periods on completion of their current terms of office.

Mr White and Mr Cropley withdrew from the meeting whilst this recommendation was considered.

Members agreed to accept the recommendations of the Search Committee and confirmed the proposed reappointments.

Mr White and Mr Cropley rejoined the meeting.

f) Standard Committee 20 November 2006.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 20 November 2006 were received and accepted.

**4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Members received a report from the Principal outlining a number of College successes which had recently been achieved. Members noted with interest the achievements of the College and of individual students. It was recognised that these achievements had a very positive on the reputation of the College.

**5. STRATEGY**

Members received a report from the Principal on a number of strategic issues:

a) Further Education and Training Bill 2006

Information was provided on the key features of the Further Education and Training Bill and it was noted that the future of the local Learning and Skills Council might be affected by the proposals. Particular note was taken of the possibility of the College awarding its own Foundation Degrees and it was agreed that a further report on this potential change should be made to the next meeting of the Corporation.

b) LSC Statement of Priorities 2007-08.

Members noted the Council's priorities and in particular the fact that rurality was now recognised as an issue by the Learning and Skills Council.

c) Leitch Report on skills in England.

It was anticipated that the Leitch Report would have significant impact on the delivery of skills and members of the Corporation were offered copies of the report summary on request.

d) General

Information was provided about the new initiatives in the sector and about the effects of the improving performance and image of the College.

## 6. HUMAN RESOURCES

Members received a report from the Director of Human Resources on a number of issues:

a) Criminal Records Bureau assurance visit

Members received information on the outcomes of the visit and some concern was noted about the issue where the level of checks recommended by the Criminal Records Bureau does not agree with that anticipated by Ofsted. The request for governors to complete Criminal Records Bureau checks was deferred until clarification had been obtained on the precise level of checking required for governors and staff members in the light of this conflict.

b) Employment Issues

Members were provided with information on a number of contentious employment issues being dealt with by the Human Resources section.

## 7. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development on the Skegness Academy for Skills. An apology was offered for the failure to invite

governors to the official opening of the Centre but it was agreed that a future governors meeting should take place so that members were offered an opportunity to see the facilities which had been created.

A discussion took place about the partnership arrangements with Grimsby Institute and it was agreed that a separate report on the financial performance of this Centre should be provided in the future.

## **8. PROPERTY**

Members received a report from the Director of Corporate Services on the work being carried out in relation to proposed property developments. The College's consultants Tribal Property were represented at the meeting by Alan Gunne-Jones who reported on the issues currently being addressed which were ensuring that the site could accommodate the College's needs, defining its special requirements, ensuring a fit with the strategic vision, ensuring that the site can be secured at an appropriate price and that the planning status of the existing site allows an appropriate contribution. Members were advised that the College's proposals could be accommodated on the site and that work was progressing on each of these issues. It was anticipated that an application would be submitted together with the development partner Modus who were likely to take a lead on the outline application and would also take responsibility for environmental and traffic assessments. Members were concerned to express the importance of the College fitting in with the broader redevelopment scheme and to manage the potential effect of negative feedback in the area.

Chris Baron and Pam Smith left the meeting at this point.

## **9. FINANCE**

Members received reports on a number of financial issues:

a) Finance Report 2006-07

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee reported on the committee's review of the accounts to 31 August 2006. It was reported that the committee had paid particular attention to the pension deficit on the annual accounts and their next meeting would be deciding whether to require a representative of the actuaries involved in the valuation to attend. The committee had been advised that the pensions deficit shown on the annual accounts would not have an impact on the College's borrowing capacity in relation to the property developments and it was anticipated that written confirmation on this point would be received in due course.

b) Risk Management

Members received a report from the Director of Corporate Services which included the annual report of the risk management group and confirmation of compliance with the Turnbull Report throughout 2005-06.

c) Annual Accounts 2005-06

The Director of Corporate Services presented the draft accounts which had been reviewed by the Finance and General Purposes and Audit Committees. Members noted that the accounts showed a deficit for 2005-06 of £374,000 compared with a re-stated profit of £149,000 for 2004-05. Members reviewed in some detail the information presented and particularly noted the Audit Committee's commendation of the clean Audit Reports which had been presented. Having considered the contents of the draft accounts members agreed to:

- i) confirm the appropriateness of the accounting policies
- ii) accept the annual report of the Audit Committee
- iii) accept the annual Audit Report for 2005-06 and Annual Plan for 2006-07
- iv) confirm the views expressed on the adequacy and effectiveness of Risk Management control and governance processes
- v) authorise the signing of the letter of representation
- vi) approve the accounts and statements as prepared for 2005-06.

**10. PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS**

Members received information from the Director of Performance and Standards on a number of performance issues:

a) Performance Management

Information was provided on headlines success rates to the College for 2005-06, upon the positive outcomes of the Annual Assessment Visit and the Ofsted review of CoVE provision and the achievement of the College in being recommended for the award of the EMskills Quality Mark for Employer Engagement.

b) 2005-06 Self Assessment

Members were provided with information on the proposed grades within the Self Assessment Report and noted that it was the strongest grade profile since before the last inspection. It was suggested that it would be appropriate for governors to give further consideration to the governance strengths and weaknesses possibly at a development event. The Self Assessment grade proposals were approved as presented.

Adrian Reynolds and Robin Whitehead left the meeting at this point.

c) Continuing Professional Development

Information was provided on the work which had been carried out to improve the College's continuous professional development model which has included the creation of a new CPD Centre at the De Montfort campus.

**11. LOCAL LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL**

The Chairman and Chief Executive of the Lincolnshire and Rutland Learning and Skills Council joined the meeting to discuss with members the priorities of the Council and how Boston College's contribution to this agenda was likely to develop in the future.

**12. GOVERNANCE**

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

a) Audit Committee Performance 2005-06

Members noted the committee's performance against its targets for 2005-06.

b) Audit Committee Performance Targets 2006-07

Members were advised that the Audit Committee had given consideration to possible targets for 2006-07 and was proposing the following:

- i) make an annual report to the Corporation
- ii) 80% attendance at meetings
- iii) make an in depth review of the selected area of College activity which was suggested to be a review of the College's Risk Management methodology.

Members of the Corporation approved these targets for the Audit Committee.

**13. DATES OF MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next meetings of the Corporation were to take place on:

28 February 2007

16 May 2007

11 July 2007.