

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOSTON COLLEGE CORPORATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER 2009

1. PRESENT

Mr P Croyley (chair), Ms S Daley, Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Mr R Haynes, Mr T Huggins, Mrs L Ladds, Mr S McCracken, Mr A Reynolds, Mrs P Smith, Mr R Stanley, Mrs B Ward, Mr D White and Mrs H Wright.

Also in attendance: Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mr J Allison-Maybank (Director of Client Services), Mr P Collins (Director of Business Development) and Mr K Tharby (Director of Human Resources).

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Lascelles and Mr A Pottle.

2. MINUTES

a) Meeting of the Corporation 14 October 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 14 October 2009 having been circulated were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Members were advised of the latest position on the bank transfer and loan.

b) Meeting of the Search Committee 14 October 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the Search Committee held on 14 October 2009 were received.

c) Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee 16 November 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 16 November 2009 were received.

d) Meeting of the Audit Committee 13 November 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 13 November 2009 were received.

3. PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Members received a report from the Principal on activities within the College since Summer 2009.

It was agreed that the Principal should feed back to students through the College newsletter the Corporation's appreciation of their activities.

4. STRATEGY

Members received a report from the Principal on national and local policy issues and also on 2009-10 funding.

The report included information on how the College was approaching the challenges set by the environment within which it was operating. Members were advised that a review of the College's mission statement might be required.

Discussion took place about the new relationship with the local authority and also about the capacity of authorities nationally to assume the new responsibilities.

It was noted that capital expenditures for the 14-19 age group would be funded by a single authority and that a single strategy was being sought. Meetings with the local authority on this had been positive.

Members were advised of the implications to funding of cuts and strategy shifts and it was noted that the College's delivery volume may reduce as a result. Members' attention was drawn to an issue re data manipulation in some other colleges which had affected success benchmarks. No Lincolnshire colleges were understood to be involved but the resultant freezing of benchmarks should be beneficial for the College's data comparisons.

Members were advised that the Association of Colleges was doing a lot of work on these issues and the Senior Leadership Team will be having a planning day to review the College's position in the New Year.

5. PROPERTY

Members received a verbal report from the Director of Corporate Services on the outcomes of the Steering Committee which had been held on 4 December 2009. A number of possible development options had been identified and members were advised of the options currently under review.

It had been agreed that potential sites for partial relocation of some of the College's facilities should be investigated and members discussed potential issues with these sites. It was agreed that investigations should proceed cautiously to minimise the potential for abortive costs.

Members were advised that the Spalding project was proceeding as planned.

6. FINANCE

Members received a report on a number of financial issues:

a) 2009-10 Performance

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee reported on the review which the committee had carried out on the accounts to 30 September 2009.

It was noted that the local government pension deficit had increased significantly and that the committee was seeking further clarification of the College's liabilities.

Members were also advised that an issue relating to Train to Gain income and expenditure was being reviewed. The College's financial performance in 2008-09 had been noted by the committee to be very credible given the abortive capital costs.

b) Risk Management

Members received information from the Director of Corporate Services on risk management and also received the annual report of the risk management group.

c) Annual Accounts 2008-09

Members received information from the Director of Corporate Services including the draft annual accounts for 2008-09 and supporting documents particularly in relation to audit of the College's affairs.

Having reviewed the accounts and documents in detail members agreed to:

- i) confirm the appropriateness of the College's accounting policies which had been endorsed by Baker Tilly
- ii) accept the annual report of the audit committee
- iii) accept the annual internal audit report for 2008-09 and the annual plan for 2009-10
- iv) confirm that the risk management control and governance processes were considered to be adequate and effective
- v) authorise the signing of the letter of representation
- vi) approve the accounts and statements for 2008-09 for publication and submission to the Learning and Skills Council.

Members were advised of a change to the organisation delivering the internal audit contract and the Audit Committee was asked to ensure that the quality of audit services was maintained.

7. COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT

Members received a report from the Director of Curriculum and Standards and presented by the Principal on production of the College's annual self assessment report and delivery of its quality improvement plan. The report contained information on the proposed grades for the College's self assessment report which

were reviewed in detail by members of the Corporation and approved subject to final moderation.

Members noted that the self assessment process was very rigorous and supported the aspiration to move the College's performance from Good to Outstanding.

8. EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

Members received a report from the Head of Quality Improvement on external assessment visits which had taken place which included a Training Quality Standards assessment, an Ofsted good practice survey and an Integrated Quality Enhancement Review relating to Higher Education.

9. LEARNER INVOLVEMENT

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development on Learner Involvement activities which had taken place in the early part of the academic year. It was noted that a learner representative conference would be taking place on 16 December 2009. Members asked that feedback on the conference should be provided at the development day and that this should be an ongoing arrangement.

It was noted that student governors would be nominated through the conference and suggested that governance should be a topic covered in the conference content.

10. FRANCHISE

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development on the College's franchise activities and contract performance. It was noted that due to funding constraints contract values were likely to reduce in 2009-10 and there were unlikely to be any new partners.

11. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL EVALUATION (FMCE)

Members received from the Director of Corporate Services a draft of the College's Management and Control Evaluation which was due for submission once approved to the Learning and Skills Council. Members noted that the document had been recommended for approval by the Audit Committee and it was agreed that it should be submitted as presented.

12. GOVERNOR VACANCY

It was confirmed that the Search Committee should review identified specialist areas in seeking to fill the outstanding vacancy.

13. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

Members were advised of the recent publication of a document regarding the Review of Governance and strategic leadership in further education. It was agreed that the Clerk to the Corporation should be asked to review the recommendations and bring back to the Corporation or one of its committees any specific issues which needed to be addressed.

14. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Corporation would take place on Wednesday 24 February 2010. It was also noted that the governor development session would take place on Friday 8 January 2010.