

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 23 APRIL 2007

1. PRESENT

Mr P Cropley, Mr C Baron, Ms S Daley, Mr R Haynes and Mrs P Smith

Also in attendance Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mr C Bradford (Deputy Principal) and Mr N Walford (Finance Manager) - item 4 only

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs L Ladds and Mr S McCracken

2. CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Mr McCracken, Mr P Cropley was appointed to act as chairman of the meeting.

3. FINANCE

Members received a report from the Director of Corporate Services on the college's financial performance to the end of February 2007. Members reviewed in detail the information presented, particularly an analysis of the profit and loss position and key variances against previous years' performance. It was noted that certain challenges had arisen during the year which had put pressure on the College's budget and, despite measures which had been taken to reduce costs, pressures which had arisen recently, particularly in respect of delivery of the funding contract, meant that it was not possible to guarantee a break-even position at the end of 2006-07. In respect of specific issues, the Committee took a number of decisions:

- a) If possible, an indication of staff numbers should be provided against the staff expenditure headings in future
- b) Consideration should be given to strategies for controlling sickness absence in specific areas which had been identified as having a particular problem with sickness
- c) Income and expenditure for the School Meals contract should be separated out for reporting purposes

It was noted that the pressures on the college's budget were in many cases common to colleges across the sector and background national information was provided to members of the Committee. Members noted that advice was that the College would not suffer claw-back on its funding allocation so long as 97% performance was achieved.

In consideration of the debt collection report, it was agreed that sums owed by an organisation which was in administration should be written off.

Members agreed the contents of the Committee's report to the Corporation.

4. LSC FUNDING AND FRANCHISING

Members received a report from the Principal on performance against the Learning and Skills Council funding allocation. It was noted that at the present time, the college was short of achieving the target figures but there were strategies in place to deliver the key targets.

Franchising was noted to be continuing to operate largely as planned. Following consultation with members of the Committee, a contract had been established with a new partner to deliver learning against the Level 2 Adult targets. Members considered a proposal to enter into a further franchise arrangement with Construction Learning World, again to assist with delivery of the Full Level 2 target, and it was agreed that this contract should be approved.

5. PROPERTY

Members received information from the Principal and Director of Corporate Services on the latest position with regard to the development of the College's property plans. Negotiations on the siting of the College were still not concluded and the College had some concerns about a proposed alternative site within the West Street Redevelopment Scheme. It was agreed that the College should continue to negotiate to ensure an acceptable site was obtained and that, in the meantime, it should reserve its right to retain the Kwiksave site. The Chairman of the Committee agreed to write to partner organisations advising them of this decision.