

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Tresham Institute of Further and Higher Education held on Monday, October 9 2006 in the DeFine Training Restaurant, George Street, Corby

Present: E R Baines (Chair)
A P Blunt (Vice Chair)
Mrs J Bews
G F Churchill
J Dickinson
A Dicks
Ms D Hayes
Ms S E Macdonald (Principal/Chief Executive)
Ms D Marsdon
D Mills
Mrs M Payne
Mrs F Smith
Dr C Sworn
A P M Waterfield
P Wingfield

In Attendance: Ms L E Battye (Director of Finance/DCEO)
R Emery (Executive Director)
Ms A Hardy (Executive Director)
Ms C McCarron (Deputy Principal (Learning))
C Robinson (Clerk to the Governors)

The Chair welcomed A Dicks to his first Governing Body meeting.

10 Minute Topic: Andrew Cheal: Northamptonshire Learning and Skills Council

The Chair introduced Andrew Cheal, Partnerships Director of Northamptonshire Learning and Skills Council, who gave a short presentation on recent developments. He stated that the LSC was being streamlined and a new Area Director had been appointed. He outlined the new changes and said there would be an area manager for Kettering and Corby. The new structure would be outward facing and there would be an emphasis on relationship building. The Chair asked whether the new structure would lead to clearer avenues of communication between the institute and the LSC. P.Wingfield questioned the loss of local representation in the new arrangements and that a local voice would be lost. He thought this was regressive. A Cheal stated that the new Regional structure could be a strategic gain with an increased voice for Northamptonshire. He concluded by giving a brief overview of developments within the County. 16-18 participation was strong and growing, the 14-19 initiatives were growing in scale and context, there is a large rise in the County of NEETS, (Not in Education, Employment or Training) a decline of the youth employment market, and there is a need for training of unskilled adults who are in employment. The Chair thanked A.Cheal for his presentation.

52/06 Apologies

1 B Patel

53/06 Declaration of Interest

2 The Chair asked any member present to declare any interest they might have in items on the agenda. There were none.

54/06 Minutes of meeting held on 10 July 2006

3 The Principal referred to item 25 of the Chief Executive's Report. (41/06) and whether the wording of the agreed Mission Statement was correct. After discussion it was decided that the Mission Statement should read:
"To deliver excellent education and skills training that meets the needs of learners and employers."

- 4 The Finance Director requested that in item 47 of the minutes (45/06) it be noted that the Institute was in Financial Category B. This was agreed.
- 5 Mrs Payne noted that in item 24 of the minutes, (41/06) the minute should read “Two years previously”, not three. This was agreed.
- 6 The minutes were approved and signed

Matters Arising

- 02/06 Corby Borough Nominee
- 7 A P Blunt reported to the Board that despite rigorous attempts by the Search and Governance Committee to obtain a nominee none had been forthcoming. After discussion it was decided to ask the Search and Governance Committee to approach Kettering Borough Council for a nominee.
- 05/06 De Freitas Trust Meetings and Investment /Reserves Policy
- 8 Mrs Bews reported that the De Freitas Trust finances were satisfactory. A De Freitas Award Calendar will be produced to aid student applications.

Chief Executive’s Report

- 9 The Principal reported that recruitment of International Students for 2005/2006 had been difficult for a variety of reasons and a strategy for taking International Education forward is underway.
- 10 Train to Gain. Tresham Institute Business Solutions (TIBS) will lead the delivery of the successful Train to Gain bid and effective working partnerships are being developed with other providers in the County.
- 11 The Principal asked the board to note the “Framework for Excellence” document in the Report. It is proposed there will be new ways of judging and measuring colleges. There will be a variety Key Performance Indicators that will be used to provide a “Comprehensive Performance Assessment for Further Education.” These will include Responsiveness to Learners/Employers, Quality of Provision, Financial Health/Control and Delivery against Plan.
- 12 A P M Waterfield asked for further clarification of the initial student enrolment figures in the Report. The Principal replied that considerable effort had been devoted to the 16-18 cohort and that the Institute had recruited above target. The initial enrolment figures were encouraging.

56/06 Options review for 16-18 provision serving and located within Stamford and Rutland

- 13 The Principal informed the Board of the background to the document. The Learning and Skills Council is to appoint a contractor to consult and seek options for 16-18 provision in Stamford and Rutland. Tresham Institute will be represented on the Advisory Group. The Principal outlined to the Board the complex pattern of factors that will affect provision in the area. It is likely that the local schools will establish sixth forms and the LSC is keen to see further development of vocational provision in the area. The Chair asked for the Board to be regularly updated on the progress of the review.

Issues from Committees

57/06 Audit Committee

- 14 The report was presented by G Churchill
- a) Minutes of meeting held on 5October2006
- 15 G Churchill reviewed the draft minutes and asked the Board to note a change to item A60/06. The minute should read, “The clerk would prepare the Audit Committee Annual Report for consideration by the Committee at the next meeting.” This was agreed.

- b) Internal Auditors
- i) Internal Audit Plan 2006/2007

16 G Churchill reported on the presentation of the Internal Audit Plan to the Committee and proposed it be approved by the Board. This was seconded by A P Blunt and unanimously agreed ***that the Internal Audit Plan 2006/2007 be approved***

- ii) Annual Report 2005/2006

17 The Board was given a brief review of the Annual Report 2005/2006 by G Churchill and it was noted that paragraph 11.1 of the report stated that “there are no major weaknesses in the Institute’s risk management, control and governance processes in the areas reviewed during the year.”

- c) External Auditors

18 The Board was informed that the representative of the External auditors was not at the Audit Committee meeting and therefore the Audit Plan for the year ended 31 July 2006 would be considered at the next meeting. The Director of Finance stated that this was retrospective report to be co-signed by the External Auditors, LSC and the Institute. The Chair suggested that in order to expedite matters, the Board authorise the Chair and Vice Chair to read and approve the report. The Board and the Chair of the Audit Committee agreed.

- d) Any Other Issues

Risk Management

19 The Chair of the Audit Committee reported on the Risk Management Action Plan 2006/2007 and the Annual Compliance Report to the Board. It was proposed by G Churchill, seconded by Mrs M Payne, and unanimously agreed ***that the Risk Management action Plan 2006/2007 be approved and the Annual Compliance report be accepted.***

20 Ms D Hayes questioned the emphasis on Risk Management in the Internal Audit Plan and stated that in future the Audit Plan should be more adventurous and be grounded in real risks facing the Institution. The Chair asked the Audit Committee to consider Ms. D Hayes observations.

58/06 Education and Standards Committee

21 The Report was presented by P Wingfield

- a) Minutes 13 September 2006

22 The minutes were received.

- b) Any Other Issues

23 P Wingfield informed the Board of the success of the collaborative arrangements for at risk subjects. There had been effective collaboration with schools in the locality and the groundwork is beginning to show results in increased Institute numbers in vocational subjects.

24 The Board was informed of current situation with the Vocational Curriculum in Rutland. The Board commended the paper (J) and were informed that the Principal and P Wingfield had attended a meeting at Rutland College to review vocational courses. Although recruitment was down it was felt that it was a useful meeting and the Options Review for 16-18 provision will assist in planning for the future.

25 The board was asked to note that arrangements are to be made for Governor Visits to Corby and Wellingborough campuses. P Wigfield encouraged all Governors to attend to enable them to hear Learner Views.

26 The Student Achievement figures (paper K) were noted. P Wingfield stated they were very

thorough and there would be a closer focus and analysis of student achievement by the Education and Standards Committee.

- 27 The Chair said that the Board required a Child Protection designated Governor now that Mrs V George was no longer a member of the Board. The duties involved were not onerous and after Discussion the Chair asked for members to consider and volunteer.

59/06 Finance Planning and Resources Committee

28 The report was presented by A P M Waterfield

29 a) Minutes of 11 September 2006

The minutes were received

30 b) Accommodation Strategy Update

The Board considered a confidential paper from the Director of Finance on the progress towards completion of Phase 1, new campus at Windmill Avenue. Members were informed that there had been a second planning refusal at the St Mary's Road site. The developers will lodge an appeal. It was reported that in the matter of the Mast relocation at St Mary's Road any grounds for optimism have now evaporated. The Director of Finance outlined the solutions available to the Institute and also the implications of retaining part of the site and re-marketing the remaining part. Approval was sought for the recommendations listed in Item 6.0 in the confidential Accommodation Strategy paper. (L) It was proposed by A P Blunt, seconded by A P M Waterfield, and unanimously agreed that ***the recommendations be approved.*** A P M Waterfield asked for the Finance, Planning and Resources Committee to be fully informed of developments.

31 The Director of Finance briefly outlined the accommodation issues relating to the Accommodation Update, Non New Build, paper. (M) In Wellingborough members were asked to note that because of the uncertainty of any proposed sites and the developments of other campuses the Institute was at present not progressing with a feasibility study. There is to be a meeting with Wellingborough Borough Council to examine possible future options. The Institute is working closely with Corby Borough Council to ensure that a new site is available and Members were given an update on progress towards the new Corby campus. The Director of Finance stated that there is a clear timetable and costings to reach the preferred solution. The Board was asked to consider the report and approve the recommendations outlined in the paper.(6.0) After discussion it was proposed by A P M Waterfield, seconded by J Dickinson, and unanimously approved that ***the Institute agree to enter into the Heads of Terms with Corby Borough Council for Strip transfer and ST James relocation. Also to approve and appoint Boden as project managers for the relocation of the Ministry of Defence premises.***

32 Members were given an update by the Director of Finance on the Rutland Boarding House facility. It was reported that the proposed rental of the Boarding Facility to Rutland County Council would not proceed, the rental terms did not meet the criteria laid down by the Finance, Planning, and Resources Committee. The Board asked the Executive to consider alternatives for the future of the Boarding House

33 c) Management Accounts

The Board was asked to note the draft management Accounts (Paper N) and recognise that continuing work and analysis is being undertaken.

34 After outlining the rationale behind Leasing of Assets re New Build (Paper O), it was proposed by A P M Waterfield, seconded by A P Blunt, and unanimously agreed ***that the Board authorises completion of the lease documentation with Barclays asset Finance in order to source the lease funding of IT and other equipment.***

d) Any Other Issues
35 A P M Waterfield informed Members of a meeting with representatives of Turner Townsend at the last Finance, Planning and Resources Committee. Turner Townsend had reported that there were concerns over the progress of the new build and it was unlikely that the 20 December decant date would be achieved. The contractor, Leadbitter is having difficulties with a major sub contractor. There had been no communication from Leadbitter that the completion date of 27 October would not be met. Turner Townsend were authorised to write a letter on behalf of the Governors to Leadbitter seeking an urgent clarification of the position and for confirmation of the completion date. The Director of Finance said that there had been no response to the letter. A P M Waterfield observed that the Institute was in a difficult position and asked Governors whether there was anything else to be done. After discussion the Chair endorsed the robust view taken by the Finance, Planning and Resources Committee. He asked that the Governors be informed of developments.

e) Policies to recommend to the Board
36 It was proposed by A P M Waterfield, seconded by AP Blunt, and unanimously agreed that *the Accounting Policies 2005/2006 be approved.*

Personnel Committee
37 There had been no meeting of the Personnel Committee

60/06 Search and Governance Committee
38 The report was presented by A P Blunt

a) Minutes of 11 September 2006
39 The minutes were received.

b) Self Assessment Report on Governance and Leadership
40 A P Blunt referred to the Self Assessment Report on Governance and Leadership year ended 2006/2006. Members were asked to note the Performance Indicators and targets that had been set for Governance. These had been considered by the Committee and members were asked to review them prior to acceptance at the next Board meeting.

c) Governor Training
41 A P Blunt introduced the topic of Governor Training and noted that the Saturday morning venues used previously had not been convenient for some governors. He sought guidance from Members as to the most suitable times and venues for Governor Training. Several members stated that they would have welcomed a longer session with the representative of the LSC. After discussion it was suggested that an event be arranged for the afternoon of Friday 23 February and the LSC be invited. J Dickinson said that it was important for the agenda to reflect the current circumstances and environment that the Institute had to work in. G Churchill observed that it would be useful for there to be training on a committee basis to enable new governors to be inducted in the work of committees. The Chair agreed and suggested that committee training should be considered for the summer training event.

c) Any Other Issues
42 A P Blunt expressed concerns at the timing of the Student Governor elections. The Clerk was requested to seek to re-arrange the timing of the elections to enable Student Governor representation at the October Board meeting. He also reminded Members that they would be invited to meet staff and that the Search and Governance Committee had noted that Governor visits had been identified as a weakness on the Governance SAR.

61/06 Financial Items not covered above

Revised Three Year Financial Plans

43 The Director of Finance reviewed the latest developments that affected the Three Year Financial Plan. The Plans were accepted and it was noted that there could be deterioration in the financial position of the Institute.

62/06 Any Other Business

44 The Chair had received a request from members of the Association for College Management for formal recognition by the Board. It was stated that this was an organisation recognised by the Association of Colleges. Ms D Hayes asked for further clarification concerning the numbers of staff involved and whether there was an Institute Policy for recognition that needed to be adhered to. After discussion P Wingfield proposed that further information be gathered including policies and necessary procedures to enable the Board to consider the matter at its next meeting. This was agreed.

**63/06 Confidential Item
Report from the Remuneration Committee**

64/06 Date of Next Meeting

46 11 December 2006

The meeting closed at 20.42 hours.