

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Tresham Institute of Further and Higher Education held on Monday, 5 February 2007 in the DeFine Training Restaurant, George Street, Corby

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

In Attendance: Ms C McCarron (Deputy Principal, Learning)
C Robinson (Clerk to the Governors)

10 Minute Topic: There was no topic for this meeting

01/07 Apologies

1 J Dickinson
Ms D Hayes
B Patel

02/07 Declaration of Interest

2 The Chair asked any member present to declare any interest they might have in items on the agenda. A P M Waterfield declared an interest in an item that would arise under 08/07, Finance Planning and Resources Committee and this was noted.

03/07 Minutes of meeting held on 11 December 2007

3 The minutes were approved and signed.

04/07 Matters Arising

56/06 Options review for 16-18 provision within Stamford and Rutland - update
4 The Principal informed the Board that the second meeting of the Rutland and Stamford Strategic Options Review Steering Group had taken place. The interim findings suggest a more local demand for post 16 education with the need for both academic and vocational provision in both the East and West of the area. Numbers in schools would not justify free standing sixth forms. Stamford College are looking at franchising a sixth form to Queen Eleanor School. The Principal had a further meeting with Peter Green and the LSC to explore further joint working with the Vale of Catmose College.

58/06 Child Protection Designated Governor
5 Mrs J Bews agreed to become the child protection Designated Governor.

05/07 Chief Executive's Report

- 6 The Principal summarised highlights of the Chief Executive's report for the Board. The Matrix Re-assessment will take place from January 31 to February 2007 and preparations for the assessment are underway. The areas to be assessed are Student Services, Flexi Workshops, TIBS, Skills for Life and Eureka Centres.
- The Regional LSC have informed the Institute that the Train to Gain budget for 2006/7 has been increased by £90,450 in line with projected increased activity. With Work Based Learning there is some way to go to meet targets but progress against predicted results suggests that most learners are progressing satisfactorily.
- Marketing activities are continuing and there are to be four Open Evenings at each campus in February. A new Website is being developed for the Institute with a web development company and the new site will be launched in July.
- The Principal referred the Board to the LSC Funding and Learner profile 2006/7. As of 11 January 2007 16-18 learners stand at 1873 which is 94% target of 2006 students. 19+ students have reached 93% of target. The Institute is confident that targets for full time students will be met. For part time 16-18 learners the figures are 291 which is 509 below a target of 800 and 19+ part time learners are 3678 which is 3112 below the target of 6790. Although the part time targets are challenging, the Principal noted that they should be achievable.
- The Board were asked to note the attached Executive Summaries of the LSC's Single Statement of Requirements Report and the Leitch Report, both place a greater focus on skills development and funding allocations in future years will reflect this. The Principal stated that Northamptonshire LSC funding allocations followed national priorities and they had received a cut in their Budget allocation for 2007/8.
- There had been an extremely successful Corby Visioning evening held at the Institute on the 18th January. The event was attended by 38 guests including Councillors, Corby Borough Council Representatives, the Business community, LSC and Secondary Heads. They listened to a range of speakers and were presented with the visioning document which outlined the future building developments and curriculum offer to meet the needs of the current and future population of Corby.

06/07 Operating Statement – Mid Year Review 2006/2007

- 7 The Board was asked to note the operating statement 2006/2007 and were informed that this was the first year of the three year operating statement and is designed to make targets more quantifiable. The operating statement is a working document and it has been designed to tie in with the Self Assessment Report. The Operating Statement 2006/2007 was received by the Board.

Issues from Committees

07/07 Education and Standards Committee

- 8 The report was presented by P Wingfield
- a) Minutes of meeting held on 30 November 2006
- 9 The Education and Standards Committee received a report from the Executive Director on matters concerning the Rutland Campus. As part of the implementation plan for 14-19 changes the Rutland Campus is preparing for the new specialist diplomas. The Institute has been closely involved in both Northants and Rutland's Gateway submission and are partners in over half of them. The Institute was aware of the need to expand the curriculum offer in Rutland and although enrolment was down at the campus this year there had recently been a successful open evening. The Committee had noted the good progress being made with Tutorials and Individual Learning Plans.
- b) Student Profile / Student Achievement
- 10 The Committee were informed of current enrolments by gender and programme area. Enrolments show a decline in the number of students but this reflects the new learning priorities of the Learning and Skills Council whereby some provision, for example, Adult and Community Learning is no longer funded. Student achievement figures presented to the Committee and it was

noted that the overall success rate had been retained at 76% despite a considerable growth in the % of long courses. However, retention rates in some courses were of concern.

The Chair of Education and Standards said that the Committee had queried the Institute's Higher Education Strategy and that they would be receiving a report which would be presented to the Board.

- 11 c) Policies to recommend to the Board
i) Teaching and Learning Policy

ii) Examinations and Assessments Policy

It was proposed by P Wingfield, seconded by J Bews and unanimously agreed that the ***Teaching and Learning Policy and Examinations and Assessments Policy be approved.***

08/07 Finance Planning and Resources Committee

12 The report was presented by A P M Waterfield

- 13 a) Minutes of meeting held on 15 January 2007
Action Planning (FP61/06). The Committee had discussed the proposals for fundraising presented by Action Planning and had considered the figures proposed in their report to be unrealistic. The Committee had decided to revisit the topic of fundraising in twelve months time.

- 14 a) Accommodation Strategy Update
The Board were informed that the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for St Mary's Road was not upheld. Barratts have been advised by their Counsel that the appeal refusal has no Legal grounds of challenge although they will be seeking further clarification from the Council. The Director of Finance referred members to her Accommodation Strategy paper. (Paper D) She reminded members that under the terms of the exchange of contracts the Institute was to have provided vacant possession on St Mary's Road by the end of January 2007. As this is not possible the Director of Finance asked members consider a further 11 month extension to the current contract to 31 January 2008. The further 11 month extension will allow the Institute to keep options open whilst it considers the way forward.

It was proposed by A P M Waterfield, seconded by P Wingfield and unanimously agreed that ***the extension of the conditional exchange to Barratts for a period of 11 months to January 31 2007 be approved.***

The Committee had discussed a report regarding the potential sale/rental of the Rutland Boarding House and agreed to recommend to the Board that the Institute explore the potential options. The Director of Finance stated that there was interest from external agencies about the use of the Boarding House. The Board unanimously agreed to ***authorise the Executive to explore the options for the rental/sale of the Rutland Boarding House.***

The Director of Finance updated the Board on developments in Wellingborough said that there are three potential sites for Tresham's relocation. The Director of Finance referred members to paragraph 3.4.2 (Paper D), The Wellingborough Innovation Centre. The Institute, subject to legal advice being sought will need to exercise the break clause in the lease before 3 March 2007 and approval is needed from the Board.

It was proposed by A P M Waterfield, seconded by A P Blunt and unanimously agreed, with one abstention ***that approval be given for management to prepare for the exercise of the break clause subject to further legal advice and discussions with Oxford Innovations and the Borough of Wellingborough.***

09/07 Personnel Committee

15 The report was presented by Mrs F Smith

- 16 a) Minutes of meeting held on 16 January 2007
The Personnel Committee had considered progress on the Staff Survey Action Plan and requested that the results of the Action Plan be presented to the Committee at their next meeting.

The Board was informed that the criteria for the Sinclair Fellowship had been agreed with Sinclair College and the focus would be on Student Support. The Committee would meet the short listed candidates at the next meeting.

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b) Any Other Issues (Meeting with Corby Campus Staff)

Mrs F Smith referred to the notes of the meeting with Corby Campus staff held before the start of the Personnel Committee. All staff at the meeting felt that the Executive Management are distant and it was generally felt that Senior Staff were remote and unaware of their concerns. There were other concerns raised including the reduction in curriculum hours on some courses and over the difference in roles between lecturer and facilitator. After discussion by members, the Chair of Governors requested that a response to the issues raised by the staff be presented to the next meeting of the Personnel Committee.

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c) Policies to Recommend to the Board

- I. Maternity Leave
- II. Individual Grievance procedure
- III. Disciplinary Policy
- IV. Freedom of Information Policy

It was proposed by Mrs M Payne, seconded by Mrs F Smith and unanimously agreed that *the Maternity Leave, Individual Grievance Procedure, Disciplinary Policy, and Freedom of Information Policy are approved.*

10/07 Search and Governance Committee

19 The report was presented by A P Blunt

a) Minutes of meeting held on 15 January 2007

20 The Minutes were received by the Board.

b) Governor Training

21 Members were reminded of the Governor Training session to be held on 23 February 2007.

c) Any Other Issues

22 A P Blunt reported that the Committee had considered the Board profile and the new Instrument and Articles of Governance issued by the DfES. The Committee had also identified two potential new Governors, M Lumsden from Moore Stephens and Simon Forrest from Wilson Browne, Solicitors. They would be introduced to members at the next Board meeting. There followed a discussion concerning membership of Committees and it was proposed by E Baines, seconded by Mrs F Smith and unanimously agreed *that M Lumsden and S Forrest be co-opted to the Audit Committee.*

11/07 Financial Items not covered above

23 There was no business for this item.

12/07 Any Other Business

24 Student Union. A Draft Student Union Constitution was presented to the Board. The Student Governors informed the board that not all the Student Union Executive had seen the document. After discussion it was agreed that the draft constitution should be considered by the Student Journey Committee with the assistance of D Casewell and then returned to the next meeting of the Board.

13/07 Confidential item – Remuneration Committee

- 25 The Chair informed members of the Remuneration Committee's progress in the matter of the proposed severance agreement between the Principal and the Institute. N. Bennison of Eversheds has been authorised to negotiate on the Governors behalf with the Principal's representative. The Chair also informed the Board that the Remuneration Committee had interviewed two candidates for the post of interim Principal. Both candidates had substantial track records in Further Education management and after due consideration the Committee have asked Mr Joe West to serve as interim Principal. Subject to negotiations it is hoped that the new Principal will be in post from March 1st 2007. N Bennison, after concluding the severance agreement with the Principal will be asked to negotiate severance terms with the Deputy Chief Executive.

The meeting closed at 19.03 hours.