

**Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Tresham College of Further and Higher Education held on Thursday 20 January 2010 at 16.00 hours in the Old Cytringanians' Room, Windmill Avenue, Kettering**

**Present:**

E Baines (Chair)  
I Bray (Vice-Chair)  
J Fern  
C Isham  
D Mackintosh  
M Malin  
S Martin  
D Mills  
G Wooldridge  
M Silverman

**In Attendance:**

C Robinson (Clerk to the Governors)  
P Fletton (Deputy Principal)  
A Hope (Director of Employer and Adult Skills)  
R Emery (Director of Partnerships)

**Presentation by Viglen Ltd**

Prior to the commencement of business the Board received a short presentation from Viglen Ltd, the ICT contractor chosen to install and set up ICT provision at the new Corby Campus. Members were informed that the proposals would upgrade and improve links between campuses and the technology would be new and allow for growing data storage demands, wireless connectivity would be important and Viglen would provide on-going support and training. After discussion and questions by members, the Chair thanked Viglen for their presentation.

**Briefing Topic: Skills Strategy**

A Hope introduced a briefing paper for the Board, The Government Skills Strategy and summarised the key points of the Government document, "Skills for Sustainable Growth." These include reduced bureaucracy, the costs of training to be shared and more information for learners. Members were informed that there would be funding changes with funding being reduced; the strategy is keen to see a growth in Apprenticeships and supporting the unemployed back into work with an emphasis on enterprise skills. The implications for Tresham are that we will be expected to do more for less but there is an opportunity to expand our Apprenticeship provision. The Chair thanked A Hope for the briefing.

**01/11 Apologies**

1 R Boardman  
M Stewart  
J Bews  
M Stegeman  
A P Blunt  
A P M Waterfield  
A McGlynn  
C Stainton

**02/11 Declaration of Interest**

2 I Bray declared an interest in matters concerning the Manor House, Corby and M Malin in matters concerning St Mary's Road.

**03/11 Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2010**

3 The minutes were agreed and signed.

#### 04/11 Matters Arising

4 There were no matters arising.

#### 05/11 Corporate

- Future for Higher Education – Browne Review

5 R Emery introduced Paper B, A Report on the Browne Review of Higher Education, and briefly summarised the key points of the Review. He asked members to note the economic context of the review which reduces the grant to Higher Education by 40% and consequently the new arrangements are a significant shift in HE funding arrangements. There will obviously implications for part-time study and the Review also recommends institutions charging differential fees to encourage choice and diversity. R Emery said Tresham would monitor the White paper and subsequent legislation with our University partners to ensure the College takes advantage of opportunities post Browne. The Board **received** and **noted** the paper.

- 14 – 19 White Paper

6 The Principal referred members to R Emery's paper C, 14-19 White Paper, and said that it was a fairly radical document; the gap between school sixth form funding and further education is to be closed. This has been an issue that has vexed FE for many years and by 2013/2014 there will be standardised funding for schools and further education. The Principal observed that more of a free market was emerging and Tresham would be well placed to take advantage of this. The proposals seem to assume there will be no cap on growth and an efficient College with a good curriculum and quality should be able to prosper.

- Tresham's Response to 14 – 19 White paper

7 The Board considered Paper D, Tresham's Response to the White Paper; the Principal said the College must be positive and proactive and noted that Tresham was the lead sponsor for the proposed UTC at Silverstone. He said work was progressing on the proposal and we needed to act quickly; D Mackintosh observed that Tresham's proposal has been very well received. With regard to Academy sponsorship, the Principal said there was little further to report at present. A new development is that Tresham has started discussions with Brooke Weston to sponsor a Free School in Corby and the Principal asked whether the Board would endorse this proposal. Members discussed the proposal and the Chair noted that we are now moving into a new territory with regard to the operation of educational establishments; D Mills said that we are now in a stronger position to shape our destiny but our focus must firmly be centred on quality and we must not just expand for the sake of it. The Principal updated members on developments in Wellingborough noting that the County and Borough Councils are concerned about the potential future lack of technical and vocational learning opportunities within Wellingborough. The Principal said that the proposals discussed would incur some expenditure but they would not be huge sums. It was suggested an ad hoc Advisory Committee of Governors be formed to advise the Board on governance of the projects discussed. This was **agreed** and the Chair would seek volunteers to join the Committee; after further discussion it was unanimously **agreed to note and support** Tresham's response to the White Paper.

- Principal's Blog

8 The Principal briefly summarised his latest Blog, he showed members the latest pictures of the new Corby building and said there was good news on the manor House Project, the SFA has finally signed the agreement for the necessary virement of funding. He noted that there is a strong marketing campaign underway for the new enrolment and that adult funding was slightly better than we originally feared.

#### 06/11 Capital Projects

- Report from Capital Project Committee

9 I Bray reported on the last Capital Project Committee meeting and noted that the contractor was two weeks behind at the last meeting due to bad weather, they were confident that this could be retrieved but the Committee noted that the biggest risk is still completion and moving in on time. The Board **noted** the report.

- St Mary's Road – Update

10 The Deputy Principal updated members on progress on the disposal of the St Mary's road site. He said the next milestone is the planning application to be held on February 1<sup>st</sup> and hopefully if this is successful the sale will proceed in March.

## 07/11 Financial

- Risk Management Report and Action Plan

11 The Deputy Principal presented the Risk Management Report and Action Plan and noted that there had been a lack of clarity over the strategic risk register and that this had been addressed. He said the risk register needs regularly reviewing by the Audit Committee and this will be a regular agenda item for the Audit Committee. It was proposed by M Malin, seconded by J Fern and unanimously **agreed** that the Risk Management Report and Action Plan be **approved**.

- Fees Policy

12 The Deputy Principal presented Paper H, Tuition Fee policy 2011-2012 and noted that because of the current economic climate there was increasing pressure for institutions to increase fees. He reminded members that fees largely concerned post 19 learners and that last year the step change in fees resulted in an increase in income. This year the fees policy is looking to consolidate and the College must be careful not to price courses beyond the means of the community. Members discussed the fees policy; with regard to the proposal to charge an administration charge of £30 for 16-19 students governors felt that with the abolition of EMA this would be insensitive. There was further discussion with a majority of members in favour of the principle of the charge but questioned the timing. At this stage of the meeting the Board was not quorate and the approval of the Fees Policy was deferred until the next meeting.

- Management Accounts

13 P Fletton introduced the Management accounts to 30 November 2010 and reported a £442,000 operating surplus which was better than forecast and suggested that we are likely to end up ahead of forecast. The adult income stream is not as robust as forecast although fee income is better than last year; staff costs are within budget but non budget costs show a negative reduction and this will be investigated. Members discussed the Accounts and **noted and received** them.

## 08/11 Any Other Business

14 There was no other business.

## 09/11 Date of Next Meeting

15 Thursday 3 March 2011 in the Old Cytringianians' Room, Kettering Campus, 16.00 hours.

### **Governor Away Day – 11 February 2011**

16 At the Governors' Away Day held at the Hunting Lodge Hotel, Cottingham a quorate meeting of the Board resumed discussion of the Fees Policy. It was agreed by members to defer the introduction of the £30 administration charge for 16-19 learners until 2012/2013. With this amendment it was proposed by I Bray, seconded by M Malin and unanimously **agreed** that the Fees Policy **be approved**.