

Plumpton College

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting
held on Tuesday 30 March 2010**

- Present: Mike Atkinson - Governor (Chairman)
 Jeremy Courtney - Governor
 Nigel Ellis - Governor
 David Evans - Governor
 John Evans - Governor
 Pat Foster - Governor
 Des Lambert - Governor / Principal
 Judy Llewellyn-Burke - Governor
 Richard Partridge - Governor
 David Rafferty - Governor
 Neil Ravenscroft - Governor
 Stan Stanier - Governor
 Denise Stokoe - Governor
 Jeff Trunkfield - Governor
- In attendance: Jenny Brooker - Clerk
 Geoff Gregory - Deputy Principal (Resources)
 David Stokes - Deputy Principal (Academic & Quality)
 Val Wilkinson - Director of Finance & Administration
- Apologies: James Currin - Governor
 Julia Hadden - Governor
 Christine Howe - Governor
 David James - Governor (Vice Chairman)

Meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

Minute no.		Action by whom	Action by when
GOV/10/06	<p>Minutes of 15 December 2009 and 26 January 2010</p> <p>Agreed: The minutes (including confidential minutes) of the meeting held on 15th December 2009 and the special meeting held on 26th January 2010 signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>GOV/09/43: The Wine Training Initiative had been launched successfully.</p> <p>GOV/09/46: Paul Tobin had been approached regarding London 2012 whilst he was visiting the college on another matter but he was not directly involved in the employment and volunteer opportunities arising from the Olympic Games.</p> <p>GOV/09/48: The Chairman and Director of Finance would contact the pension actuary to request that mortality assumptions were altered and would report back to Corporation on this issue.</p>	MA/VW	01.05.10

	<p>GOV/09/48: The Annual Review had been published and circulated to key stakeholders.</p> <p>GOV/09/50: The College had received £1.1m of the capital grant repayment from the LSC.</p> <p>GOV/09/60: Investigations were taking place on potential equine sites the College could acquire in the east of the County.</p> <p>GOV/10/01: The student disciplinary policy had been updated and had been circulated to Governors for final comment.</p> <p>GOV/10/02: The consultation response on the National Commissioning Framework had been submitted.</p> <p>GOV/10/03: The consultation response on the Review of Governance had been submitted.</p>		
GOV/10/07	<p>Minutes of the Corporation's Committees</p> <p>The respective Committee chairmen outlined the key points of the meetings and the minutes were noted.</p> <p>a) Academic Committee In the absence of Mr James, the Vice Chair of the Academic Committee, Mrs Stokoe, provided a summary of the key issues the committee had considered including the new Ofsted framework and the importance of resources continuing to primarily focused on teaching and learning.</p> <p>b) Audit Committee The Committee had considered three chapters of the finance manual which had been revised and updated to reflect current procedures and remove unnecessary burden. The committee recommended the approval of the financial guidelines by the Corporation.</p> <p>Mrs Foster congratulated the Senior Management Team on the progress that had been made in implementing audit recommendations. She reported that there were now few recommendations which remained outstanding.</p> <p>Agreed: The financial guidelines on major capital expenditure, asset disposal, and financial planning, budgeting and budgetary control be approved and adopted by the College.</p> <p>c) F&GP Committee The F&GP Committee had reviewed the strategic targets for procurement of goods and services and concluded that</p>	VW	

	<p>procurement and efficiency savings of 2.5% per annum were a realistic target, plus further economies of scale equivalent to 60% of the rate of the growth in turnover.</p> <p>With regard to the recruitment of HE students and continued HE growth, the Principal advised that the UoB had recently advised that it would be strongly opposed to the College recruiting over and above its allocation of student numbers.</p> <p>Governors were disappointed with the UoB stance on this issue as the College was prepared to fully accept the risks associated with over-recruitment. The risk to the UoB in terms of its reputation for allowing a partner college to over recruit was however recognised.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A 2.5% savings target per annum be adopted for procurement and efficiency. (b) Governors confirmed their willingness to allow an exposure of up to £200k in fines for over recruitment of HE students, but the over-recruitment should not be so high as to cause significant embarrassment to UoB, and in return we should expect UoB to contribute much more actively to the recruitment of non-EU and other students without entitlement to student loans. (c) The HE capital infrastructure be expanded during 2009/10 at a cost of £300k (with £200k of this met by the UoB) subject to approval of the business case by the Buildings & Farm Sub Committee. (d) The Buildings & Farm Sub Committee be delegated to approve plans for the development of Green Oak up to a maximum cost of £400k. <p>d) Search Committee</p> <p>Although the committee had not met since before the last meeting of the Corporation, members had informally corresponded and recommended the re-appointment of Mr Partridge and Dr Stan Stanier for a second four year term of office. The Chairman thanked Mr Partridge and Dr Stanier for the contribution they had made to the Corporation.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>Mr Richard Partridge and Dr Stan Stanier each be appointed for a second four year term of office commencing 28 March 2010.</p> <p>e) Remuneration Committee</p> <p>A recent internal audit of corporate governance had identified that the Remuneration Committee had not held an annual meeting as required under its terms of reference.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the Corporation and its committees</p>	<p>DPL/GJG</p> <p>DPL/VW</p> <p>DPL/VW</p> <p>MA/VW</p> <p>JKB</p>	
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	<p>could reach an informal consensus on issues through correspondence but under the Articles of Government any decisions reached would need to be formalised at a properly constituted meeting. The Standing Orders and terms of reference of the Remuneration Committee had been amended to reflect this and the terms of reference of the committee had also been amended to reflect that the position of Clerk was not a senior post holder post.</p> <p>Agreed: The proposed terms of reference for the Remuneration Committee be approved.</p>	JKB	
GOV/10/08	<p>Approval of Strategic Plan, Strategic Risk Register and Statement of Risk Appetite</p> <p>The strategic plan had been revised to reflect the discussions of the strategic planning workshop, committee recommendations, the Self Assessment Report and informal discussions between the Chairman and members of the Senior Management Team. The plan comprised six objectives with strategic targets shown in bold font and annual operating targets shown in italics.</p> <p>With regard to student growth, there were a number of income streams. The Principal advised that risks in meeting student number targets included uncertainty as to whether both tuition and residential funding would follow the learner regardless of the local authority they were recruited from, the level of financial contribution schools would need to make to student enrolment on increased flexibility programmes, punitive fines for over recruitment of HE students and an unknown level of future apprenticeship funding. This could make some targets difficult to achieve.</p> <p>The priorities for quality improvement remained broadly the same as last year. The revised Aims had not incorporated all the changes made in the new Ofsted inspection framework, which in some areas had deviated from Governors' own concept of excellence. Dr Stokes advised that the road map used by the Corporation to measure progress against targets would be updated to ensure performance could be considered against the new Ofsted criteria as well as the targets in the strategic plan. A number of issues were identified for the Academic Committee to consider at its next meeting.</p> <p>A new objective on ancillary activities demonstrated the Corporation's commitment to maximise the revenue of non academic activities. The impact of the economic situation on objectives relating to the farm was carefully considered regarding their realistic level. The objectives in this area</p>		

	<p>would be monitored by the Buildings & Farm Sub Committee in the context of the appraisal of the proposed dairy project. All targets within the plan were subject to annual review.</p> <p>With regard to financial targets, the Plan retained the Objective of being broadly in a position to repay all debt by 2016/17 if we so chose. The aim was for pay costs to remain at an average of no more than 50% of turnover.</p> <p>There remained much uncertainty surrounding future levels of funding. Governors were provided with reassurance that the Senior Management Team had conducted financial modelling of various funding cut scenarios ranging from 5 to 20%, and that there were potential savings available to offset this. Future funding over the next 2-3 years was likely to remain uncertain until after the general election and comprehensive spending review. There might be a need to revise the Strategic Plan further over the summer in response to this. The strategic plan should provide the framework for the working up of shorter-term targets under each Objective in the SAR. Opportunities for obtaining charitable funding would need to be pursued; further major capital spending beyond 2012 was likely to depend on this.</p> <p>There were few changes to the strategic target concerning resources. Environmental targets had been updated in response to the recommendations of the Environmental Sub Committee. There were also few changes to the strategic target regarding the management of external relationships. It was acknowledged that the UoB remained the key HE partner of the College, but we had to develop other relationships as well in order to achieve the planned growth in HE activity.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The strategic and annual operating plan be approved subject to the addition of targets concerning quality and ancillary activities and performance indicators. (b) The strategic risk register and statement of risk appetite be approved. (c) The College aim to achieve an overall grade of Good with many Outstanding features at the next Ofsted inspection including a grade of Good for Safeguarding and for Equality & Diversity. (d) At its next meeting the Academic Committee consider criteria for defining Outstanding in HE, targets for pre enrolment screening, improved management attendance, web based clearing, targets for the proportion of full time students finding paid employment and methods of establishing the employability of students. 	<p>MA/DTS</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>JKB</p>	<p>01.05.10</p> <p>01.06.10</p>
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	<p>(e) The residential services sub committee produce draft financial targets for catering and residential provision by June 2010.</p> <p>(f) Adult Learner Responsive provision student numbers to be further broken down and circulated to Governors.</p>	<p>JKB</p> <p>DTS</p>	<p>01.06.10</p> <p>01.05.10</p>
GOV/10/09	<p>Standing Orders</p> <p>Presenting her report, the Clerk advised that the review of Standing Orders had been brought forward due to the number of changes required to the document and the need to streamline processes.</p> <p>The document had been re-structured into six sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of the Corporation • Business of the Corporation • Corporation Accountability and Transparency • Continuous Improvement in Governance Performance • Miscellaneous Matters • Appendices <p>The report to members listed each proposed change. The Clerk highlighted that key changes included the Corporation being permitted to appoint more than one Vice Chairman (as the Chair designate post was also a Vice Chairman position), confirmation of which senior staff were required to complete the register of interests, a new section on the review of confidential information, the option for papers to be sent electronically if deadlines for the circulation of papers were at risk of not being met and the need for Governors to have car insurance for business use in order for mileage costs to be reimbursed.</p> <p>Corporation papers were statutorily required to be sent to members seven days in advance of meetings, but the wording of the Articles of Government was ambiguous as to whether this included papers for standing committee meetings. The Clerk advised that advice on this issue would be sought from the AoC.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>(a) The revised standing orders be approved and continue to be reviewed every two years.</p> <p>(b) The Code of Conduct be reviewed by the Corporation every three years.</p> <p>[Mr Rafferty left the meeting at this point].</p>	<p>JKB</p> <p>JKB</p>	

<p>GOV/10/10</p>	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>The Corporation was provided with a summary of actions taken in the light of safeguarding becoming a limiting grade under the new Ofsted framework and feedback from the inspection of residential provision. The following actions had been taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the recruitment and selection policy • Review of the student disciplinary policy • Staff residing in College accommodation being asked to sign a document as an extension to their tenancy agreement regarding the access of guests into College buildings • Dr Stan Stanier had been appointed the designated governor for child protection and he had been booked to attend child protection training. • The safeguarding policy had been revised and considered by the Residential Services Sub Committee, Academic Committee and the Local Authority Designated Officer for ESCC. <p>The Clerk provided an overview of the role of the Governing Body with regarding to safeguarding including Governors accountability and a summary of the legislation surrounding safeguarding including the implications of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act.</p> <p>The Chairman identified the importance of the physical health and well being of students being an integral part of child protection and the importance of the health and safety policy and risk assessments being reviewed from a safeguarding perspective.</p> <p>Governors considered the implications of public footpaths and rights of way running through the campus and the importance of students being given appropriate advice and support regarding safeguarding issues including access to the College counsellor and reporting processes for issues such as bullying and harassment.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>(a) The safeguarding policy be approved subject to the addition of information regarding safeguarding checks relating to work experience placements, which would require further consideration by the Senior Management Team.</p> <p>(b) The Recruitment and Selection Policy be updated to include a statement that the College is committed to</p>	<p>SMT</p>	<p>01.05.10</p>

	<p>safeguarding and that all staff will receive a copy of the safeguarding policy on appointment.</p> <p>(c) The Residential Services Sub Committee to give consideration to managing the risk of public access to the campus.</p>	<p>JKB</p> <p>JKB/SS</p>	<p>01.05.10</p> <p>01.06.10</p>
GOV/10/11	<p>Principal's Report</p> <p>Presenting is report, the Principal reported on staffing changes and confirmed that an accountant had been appointed on a fixed term contract to assist with general accounting processes.</p> <p>The Principal advised that some funding streams were yet to be finalised but it was thought that the best case scenario was for income to remain at the same level as the current year although this was far from certain yet.</p> <p>Machinery of Government changes meant compared to the majority of its non-FE work being through the LSC there were now a multiple number of organisations that the College needed to liaise with including three LEAs, nine partnership boards, the SFA and YPLA. This was a considerable administrative and bureaucratic burden. It was vital that the College developed relationships with key stakeholders and targets regarding this had been included within the strategic and annual operating plan.</p> <p>There had been many staff and student successes recently including the award of a bursary from the Farmer Club Charitable Trust to staff member Jo Cowderoy. Students had taken part in several competitions and the College had hosted various events including the annual 'Green Power' go-kart racing event.</p> <p>The Principal provided details of recent events and visitors to the College and confirmed that HRH The Duchess of Cornwall was visiting the College in April as Patron of the Plumpton College Charitable Foundation.</p> <p>Lastly, the Principal advised that the College was scheduled to be inspected by June 2011 and was currently conducting a mock inspection in preparation.</p>		
GOV/10/12	<p>Change to Instrument and Articles of Government</p> <p>The Instrument and Articles of Government needed to be updated as a result of the demise of the LSC. As the proposed changes were technical in nature, the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills had proposed that the changes be made through a Modification Order rather than</p>		

	<p>issuing a completely new document. DBIS had also produced draft regulations amending the regulations regarding the establishment or dissolution of FE corporations.</p> <p>The Corporation considered the Modification Order and correspondence the Chairman had sent to DBIS on 4 March 2010 supporting the proposals.</p> <p>Agreed: The Corporation note the Modification Order.</p>		
GOV/10/13	<p>Attendance Report</p> <p>The Corporation was provided for information the attendance rates of Governors to Corporation, Committee and Sub Committee meetings for the period 1 September 2009 to 29 March 2010. The overall percentage attendance rate was 79%.</p> <p>Agreed: The attendance of governors be noted.</p>		
GOV/10/14	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>Presenting her report, the Director of Finance advised that the report outlined the College financial situation as at 31 January 2010 and had been considered by the F&GP Committee at its previous meeting.</p> <p>The College was forecast to achieve a small surplus over the next two years but finances were likely to be very tight.</p> <p>Agreed: The finance report to 31 January 2010 be noted.</p>		
GOV/10/15	<p>Bureaucracy Report</p> <p>Agreed: This item be postponed to the next meeting of the Corporation.</p>	JKB/MA	
GOV/10/16	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 13 July 2010 at 5pm. There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.05pm</p>		

JKB 31/03/10

Signed.....(Chairman) Dated.....