

**HARROW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION
WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2013**

1. CORPORATION DEVELOPMENT SESSION

Corporation development sessions were presented on:

1.1 Success Rates 2012/13

Confirming the College's success rates for the year and identifying those areas requiring further attention, the action being taken in response was summarised and reviewed.

1.2 The Lowlands performance Space & Café Bid

Following confirmation that the College had been successful in its bid for the running of the Lowlands performance Space & Café at Harrow on the Hill, a presentation was provided summarising the bid objectives for:

- 1.2.1 The delivery of a programme of events and activities that would maximise use of the performance space/café and attract visitors to Lowlands Park and Harrow Town Centre.
- 1.2.2 A self-sufficient facility that was not dependent on financial support from the Council.
- 1.2.3 Providing learning and placement opportunities for Harrow residents, which would complement the town Centre business forum events and Harrow Council's Arts Centre.

Reviewing the opportunities and challenges for the College, there particular discussion of:

- 1.2.4 The benefits to the College arising from the opportunities for learning and work experience and engagement with the local community.
- 1.2.5 The extent of any investment required by the College, noted to be confined to infrastructure support through operations management, financial management, marketing, and security and the value of College staff time. There was consideration the impact on and risks associated with the already considerable workload of management. Acknowledging the competing pressures on management time, particularly during the development phase, members were advised that the Project was considered manageable especially with the selection of Greenwich Co-operative Development Agency (GCDA) as its catering partner for the project, noting that the company had significant experience, providing confidence of a low risk option for the delivery of catering services.
- 1.2.6 The financial arrangements, noting income was to be generated through payments for use of the performance space and catering by third party users, competitively priced space hire and admission income from the key note events.

After consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to **ENDORSE** the College's involvement in the Project.

2. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Attendance, Apologies for Absence, Welcome & Introductions

Membership:	Nick Davies	(Except Item 2.3.1)
	Yvette Adu-Mante	(Up to Item 7)
	Mark Eastwood	
	Sandra Ernstoff	(Chair)
	Talwyn Hayes	(Up to Item 7)
	Tony Medhurst	
	Steve Owen	
	Ketan Sheth	(Up to Item 2.6)
	Mumtaz Van Der Vord	(Up to Item 7)
	Antonio Weiss	

In attendance:	Judith Abbott	(Up to Item 7)
	Pat Carvalho	(Up to Item 7)
	Jayne Chaplin	(Clerk) (Except Item 7.2.2)

Apologies:	Jay Jobanputra
	Sachin Shah
	Karen Tyerman
	Elizabeth Warriner

2.2 Chair's & Clerk's Announcements

None reported.

2.3 Board Business: Membership & Governance Arrangements

A report was summarising membership and governance arrangements requiring members' consideration.

Members were advised that

2.3.1 Currently, there was one vacancy in the category of student member and the term of office of the independent member, Nick Davies, was coming to an end. It was reported that the process for the election of a new student governor was underway and that the re-appointment of the independent member, Nick Davies, for a further term was recommended by the Search & Development Committee.

2.3.2 In respect of the arrangements for Corporation Chair and Vice Chair, whilst Steve Owen had confirmed his willingness to continue in the role of Vice Chair for a further term, Sandra Ernstoff, had indicated her wish to now step down from the role of Corporation Chair. It was confirmed that Nick Davies has expressed interest in being considered for appointment as Corporation Chair.

It was **RESOLVED:**

2.3.3 On the recommendation of the Search & Development Committee, to **APPROVE** the **RE-APPOINTMENT** of Nick Davies for a second term of office of four years.

2.3.4 To **APPROVE** the appointment of Nick Davies as Chair of the Corporation for a period of one- year with effect from 17/10/13

2.3.5 To **APPROVE** the appointment of Steve Owen as Vice-Chair of the Corporation for a period of one- year with effect from 17/10/13.

2.4 Declarations of Interest & Agenda Order

A Declaration of Interest was received from Sandra Ernstoff with her work with the Education Funding Agency.

2.5 Minutes of the Corporation Meetings, 10 July & 23 July 2013

The Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 10 July 2013 and the Special Meeting held on 23 July 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2.6 Matters Arising

None advised.

3. ITEMS REQUIRING FORMAL APPROVAL, ADOPTION OR ENDORSEMENT

3.1 Reports on and Recommendations from Committee Meetings:

3.1.1 Search & Development Committee, 10/10/13

An overview of the business of the meetings was presented noting that in addition to the substantive items presented for consideration, there had been preliminary discussion of arrangements for the Corporation Conference scheduled for 31 January 2014.

Members reflected on the success of the 2013 Conference, noting the preferences expressed by the Committee member for the potential programme for 2014:

- To remain on-site, as it provided a good opportunity for interacting with staff and students and raising the Corporation profile; and for the day to conclude with dinner in the evening to allow more informal discussion and for the sharing of experiences of the day.
- Whilst not necessarily a direct repetition of “curriculum links”, for a “carousel” of activities that would provide an opportunity for members to see the impact of governance on operational effectiveness through engagement with learners such as a “Dragons’ Den” type activity; improved understanding of teaching and learning such as a “master-class” showing an example of an “outstanding” lesson, innovation or imaginative use of technology; and/or activities that would demonstrate the benefits of investment made in the curriculum/estate infrastructure.

After endorsing the views of the Committee it was suggested for members wishing to put forward any further preferences to contact the Clerk; and the Principal confirmed that the Conference content would be considered in the context of the preferences expressed and a programme produced in due course.

The substantive items of business were then reviewed:

3.1.1a Committee Annual Report 2012/13

The annual report for the Search & Development Committee was received.

The business reviewed during 2012/13 and the impact of the Committee's contribution to the work of the Corporation that period was considered and noted.

After discussion and on the recommendation of the Search & Development Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the Committee's Annual Report for 2012/13.

3.1.1b Governance Development Plan 2013/14

A report was received outlining the governance development objectives proposed for 2013/14, which had been reviewed by the Search & Development Committee.

After discussion and on the recommendation of the Search & Development Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the Plan for 2013/14.

3.1.2 Resources Committee Meetings, 11/09/13 and 10/10/13

An overview of the business of the meetings was presented and the substantive items for consideration presented:

Academic Year 2012/13:

3.1.2a Year-end 31 July 2013 – draft Annual Accounts

A report was received summarising the College's draft year-end position for 31 July 2013.

It was reported that the draft accounts showed a year-end operating deficit before FRS17 pension adjustments of £ (474) k compared to budget of £100k, a negative variance of £ (574) k, with the deficit increasing to £ (610) k after FRS17 actuarial adjustments.

Acknowledging that the accounts were subject to potential adjustment following the outcome of the external audit of financial statements, the data was reviewed in more detail noting in particular:

- The partial achievement of the original budgeted cost gap attributed, in part, to income higher than budget, primarily because additional SFA allocation and the reduced cost of sub-contracted activity, the positive impact of which had been completely offset by the budget overspend on interim managers covering key vacancies .
- The Capital expenditure over-spends due to some expenditure timing differences and unbudgeted expenditure, such as for the purposes of DDA compliance.
- The positive cash balance maintained throughout the year.

Advising members of the reducing cash reserves, it was confirmed that an overdraft facility was required to be in place for the 2013/14 financial year before the signing of the final accounts.

The report was noted.

3.1.2b Estates Update

Members were updated estates related developments since those last reported.

Noting in particular those potential opportunities being explored to bring in future funding to facilitate investment in areas of the College estate requiring replacement and/or upgrading, members were advised of a recent meeting with the UK Director of the Goodman Group to discuss recent developments regarding their option to purchase the Steiner Academy, adjacent to the Harrow Weald campus car park. Reporting on the areas of mutual interest identified, it was noted that a further meeting was scheduled and that a verbal feedback would be communicated in due course.

The report was noted.

3.1.2c Committee Annual Report 2012/13

The annual report for the Resources Committee was received.

The business reviewed during 2012/13 and the impact of the Committee's contribution to the work of the Corporation that period was considered and noted.

After discussion and on the recommendation of the Resources Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the Committee's Annual Report for 2012/13.

Academic Year 2013/14:

3.1.2d Enrolment 2013/14: Progress Report

A report was received updating members on performance against the current year's enrolment targets.

It was reported that to date:

- 16-18 learner numbers were above the EFA allocation, and higher than for the same period in 2012/13 highlighting a reversal in the decline in numbers observed in recent years. Reviewing full-time learners it was noted that whilst good, remaining short of the College's ambitious internal target, further programmes were planned to increase overall numbers and maximise funding for next year.
- Recruitment to 19+ ALR programmes was progressing and in excess of target, to the extent that without securing additional funding, ambitions for later in the year would be constrained. Members were advised that the College had spoken to the SFA and with additional funding currently available only for further apprenticeships, a business case for such funding was being prepared both for 16-18 and 19+.

After welcoming the positive report on numbers there was particular discussion of the need to now focus the retention of enrolled learners in order to try and ameliorate any churn and any corresponding negative impact on the College allocation for the year.

The report was noted.

3.1.2e Sub-contractor & Partnership Provision 2013/14

The Subcontracts & Partnerships Monitoring Report was presented.

After reporting that in 2012-13, sub-contractors and partners had delivered training that had drawn down funding of £1,224k for a cost of £575k, members were advised that for 2013/14 contracting was largely already in place, resulting from carry-over commitments relating to apprenticeship programmes spanning two academic years, although it was reported that in contrast with prior years, the budget for such activity had been further reduced with more in-house delivery at higher margin.

The report was noted.

3.1.2f Capital Projects Update

A report was received updating members on progress with the College's capital projects.

Progress in respect of the projects was summarised advising members that:

- Regarding the Harrow on the Hill projects, AA Projects had been appointed to manage the Business Enterprise Centre Project with Stage C+ design completed and Stage D progressing; and following its previous experience in this area, the College would be managing the laboratory refurbishment element itself, having gained experience of this over the last two summers with completion planned for summer 2014.
- With regard to the Harrow Weald LLDD Building, members were advised that, AA Projects had been appointed to project manage the project in parallel with the Harrow on the Hill development.

There was consideration of the current main issues concerning the Harrow on the Hill projects, noting in particular:

- The design cost of the Harrow on the Hill Business Enterprise Centre Project required further value engineering; and the early indications of potentially high construction costs due to constrained nature of the site.
- The College's responsibility for managing decant of occupants of Caxton and Darby, which had been excluded in the SFA costing model and the 2013/14 College budget, following the assumption that no capital bid would be secured., it was reported that the most cost effective solutions were now being explored. Discussing the issue of decant of occupants of Gaskell Building at Harrow Weald, members were advised that this was similarly to be achieved in the most cost effective manner but that it was considered less challenging with the building only partially occupied.
- Discussions with Barclays Bank regarding a bank loan to fund the College contribution remained on-going.
- The VAT implications and the extent to which liabilities in this regard could be mitigated, noting that the options available in this regard were being explored

The report was noted.

3.1.2g Capital Projects & Governance Arrangements

A report was received following review of current governance arrangements.

It was reported that the current committee structure had been reviewed in the context of the current and forthcoming business to ascertain the extent to which it was considered that the present governance arrangements would remain fully effective for the Corporation to effectively discharge its responsibilities. Whilst the current structure had been sufficient to date, it was observed that in anticipation of strategic developments in general, the current redevelopment projects on both main College campuses in particular; and the challenging financial constraints within which the College was operating, the resurrection of a Property & Accommodation Committee would be prudent.

Noting the need to ensure the appropriate degree of focus and separation from the Corporation's other business responsibilities, and concurring with the rationale for the proposed structural changes, members were advised that it had also been the suggestion of the Resources Committee for the remit of such a committee to be extended to include strategic property matters to ensure the review of developments and arrangements in the appropriate context. Discussing the timescales for the introduction of the Committee, it was confirmed that proposed meeting dates and Committee membership would be submitted for consideration at the December 2103 Corporation meeting.

After discussion and on the recommendation of the Resources Committee it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the re-formation of a Property & Accommodation Committee with a remit and terms of reference as proposed.

4 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

4.1 Clerk's Update

The Clerks' report was received updating members on the latest national governance developments.

There was particular discussion of Ofsted's plans for the introduction of Data Dashboards for FE colleges to facilitate the monitoring of teaching, learning and student outcomes. In response to questioning it was confirmed that the intended launch date was spring 2014 with consultation on the proposed format and content taking place in the meantime.

The report was noted.

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

5.1 Principal's Report & College Development Plan

The Principal's Report and the Development Plan for the year was received.

The Report was reviewed noting in particular recent meetings with partners and stakeholders and development in the College's international activities; and the strategic objectives for the year were considered and endorsed.

Following discussion, the report was noted.

6. OTHER BUSINESS, MEETING EVALUATION & DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.1 Any Other Business

There was none.

6.2 Date of Next Meeting

5.30pm, Wednesday 18 December 2013

6.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.