

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NEW COLLEGE NOTTINGHAM CORPORATION
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2009 AT 5.30PM**

PRESENT:

Anne Adams - Chair	✓
Geoff Hall – Principal	✓
Richard Brackenbury	Apologies
Delroy Brown	Apologies
Lucy Dadge	Apologies
Nigel Hallam	✓
Brian Hambidge	✓
Karen Harrison	✓
Marianne Howarth	✓
Thulani Molife	✓
David Nelson	✓
Mick Newton	Apologies
Carol Parkinson	✓
Tim Richmond	Apologies
Ellie Sewell	✓
Carla Stemate	Apologies
Ralph Tonge	Apologies

IN ATTENDANCE:

Julie Ashton	Deputy Principal
Andrew Hartley	Vice Principal Funding and Finance
Claire Kay	Clerk to the Corporation

Consideration of items of business was based on reports prepared by College management and the Clerk to the Corporation which were circulated with the agenda to all members of the Corporation in advance of the meeting. Steve Duty, Health and Safety Manager joined the meeting to present his paper at agenda item 5.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from the members listed above. The apologies were accepted by the Board. Margaret Allen and Val Mattinson also sent apologies for the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

There were no declarations of interest in the agenda items to note.

3. MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2009

The minutes, including the confidential minute, from the meeting of the 21 October 2009 were reviewed by the Board. The Board passed the following resolution:

The Board approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2009 and approve the public minutes for publication.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Item 3: The Clerk reported that Tim Richmond had submitted his resignation to the Board following the Finance and Resources Committee on 3 December 2009 due to his involvement in the Nottingham conurbation commissioning body being created following the approval of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Bill. The Board accepted Tim's resignation and thanked Tim for his contribution to the College. Tim's resignation required the Search Committee to consider the skills of the Finance and Resources Committee membership and an additional meeting would be arranged early in 2010.

Item 3: Following the appointment of Chair and Vice Chair at the October meeting, the Clerk reminded members of the option within the Standing Orders to appoint 2 Vice Chairs. Due to circumstances of both the current Chair and Vice Chair in the first few months of the New Year the Clerk considered it would be appropriate to designate a second Vice Chair in case both the Chair and Vice Chair were unavailable. The Standing Orders require a nomination and election process but due to the timeframe it was suggested a volunteer could be designated as an interim Vice Chair until a nomination and election process could be undertaken before the March board meeting.

The Board passed the following resolution:

The Board appoint David Nelson as an interim second Vice Chair until a nomination and election process can be undertaken before the March 2010 Corporation meeting.

Item 5: The risk register was not on the agenda as the Audit Committee had not received the final version as it was still being developed.

5. **ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2008/09**

The Annual Health and Safety Report including accident statistics and priorities for 2009/10 was presented. The final report had still not been received from the HSE following the chemical spillage at Clarendon. The action plan had been reviewed by the Health and Safety management group and it was noted that they were aiming to focus on reducing the accident statistics in 2009/10 and also to review the asbestos register held by the College.

Members noted the LSC had not undertaken an annual Health and Safety Inspection for 18 months. The College improved from satisfactory to good at the last inspection and members considered this external assessment had provided a good source of assurance in the past. Members requested statistics to be collated and reported in curriculum areas in future reports but noted that there was no industry benchmark data available for accident statistics.

Members noted the biggest Health and Safety concern currently was ensuring the safety of lone working staff. Systems needed to be developed to be able to account for all staff and training on personal safety for staff working alone and off site was being promoted to staff.

The Board passed the following resolution:

The Board approve the Annual Health and Safety Report for 2008/09 and the Safety Action Plan for 2009/10.

Steve Duty left the meeting.

6. **COLLEGE STANDARDS REPORT**

The report outlined the recommendations from the Standards Committee in relation to the College Self Assessment Report (SAR) and the Annual Equality and Diversity Report. The Quality Improvement Strategy and plan for 2009/10 was also presented to members.

The Corporation reviewed the grades, key strengths and areas for improvement outlined in the SAR and agreed to review the strengths associated with Train to Gain provision to join this area of curriculum strength into one or two organisational strengths. The plans to impact on the areas for improvement were outlined and 4 improvement goals reviewed. The Standards Committee would be discussing these goals in relation to the overall Quality Strategy at its meeting in February.

Members noted that all areas of provision were above the LSC minimum level of performance of 60% but only 3 areas had reached the 75% Quality Strategy target for the year. Members noted that the overall improvement in student success rates continued at a rate of increase higher than national benchmarks but further improvements were needed if the College was to move from good to outstanding.

The Corporation noted compliance with their legal obligations in relation to Equality and Diversity. The Standards Committee had undertaken a thorough review of the Annual Report and priorities for 2009/10. The attainment data within the SAR demonstrated a larger than average gap between the highest and lowest performing ethnic groups requiring action to be taken to narrow the gap.

Members reviewed the Governance SAR. The grade of good was evidenced by the findings of the committee self assessment process, the review of governance and the completion of the Financial Management and Control Evaluation. The Governance SAR provided evidence for the grading of the leadership and management section of the College SAR.

The Board passed the following resolutions:

- **The Board approve the Governance Self Assessment Report for 2008/09**
- **The Board approve the College Self Assessment Report for 2008/09**
- **The Board approve the quality improvement strategic goals and Quality Improvement Plan for 2009/10**
- **The Board approve the Annual Equality and Diversity Report for 2008/09**

7. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2008/09

Members received the summary report presenting the work undertaken by the Audit Committee and the Finance and Resources Committee in recommending the Financial Statements to the Corporation for approval.

The underlying surplus for the year ended 2008/09 was £1.7m but due to the increase in pension costs from £1.1m to £1.5m and £228,000 written off in relation to estates related costs the UK GAAP position for the year was £80,000 deficit. The financial health indicator in accordance with framework for excellence was “good”. Members noted the impact on the Balance Sheet of the ending of the revolving credit facility in July 2010.

The increasing cost of servicing the pension deficit was commented on extensively by the Financial Statements Auditors in their management letter. But overall members welcomed the positive comments in the management letter and the unqualified opinion given to the financial statements and supported the Members Report.

Members noted that the subsidiary companies of the College had ceased trading and would be wound up during 2009/10.

The Board passed the following resolutions:

- **The Board accept the External Auditors Management Letter for 2008/09**
- **The Board accept the 2008/09 Annual Audit Committee Report**
- **The Board accept the Accounting Officer’s Annual Assurance Opinion for 2008/09**
- **The Board approve the Member’s Report and Financial Statements for 2008/09**
- **The Board approve the signing of the Letter of Representation to the External Auditors**

- **The Board approve the signing of the letters of support for New College Nottingham Property Services Ltd and Visions Learning Ltd.**

8. REPORT FROM THE STUDENT GOVERNORS

The key highlights of the term were outlined by the Student Governor who also reported a new reciprocal agreement had been signed with NTU for a further 3 years. The continuation of the Big Debate was welcomed by members especially in an election year. Members were pleased to see the dynamic events managed by the Union and the increased inclusion of HE and International Students into events.

Members noted the report.

Ellie Sewell left the meeting at 6:45pm

9. PRINCIPALS OVERVIEW

The report detailed the achievements and activities undertaken by students and staff. The Principal reported the College's success in winning the AoC Beacon Award for Leadership of Innovation in Curriculum Development presented at the AoC Annual Conference. Governors who attended the conference this year reported it had being highly informative and enjoyable.

Members noted the report.

10. HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY 2009-2014

The new Hefce requirement to submit a HE Strategy by 31 January required the Corporation to review the HE policies and strategic objectives. Members reviewed the 4 strategic objectives and considered they adequately promoted the development of higher level skills and progression. Members supported the overall strategy and noted that it met the requirements of Hefce.

The Board passed the following resolutions:

The Board approve the Higher Education Strategy 2009-14 for submission to the Higher Education Funding Council.

11. FINANCE REPORT OCTOBER 2009

The report outlining the financial performance against budget to October 2009 was reviewed by the Corporation. The position showed a favourable variance against budget of £167,000 but the variances were mainly due to the timing of the collection of fees and the variance would diminish over the coming months. The performance against LSC funding targets was in line with expectations. The profile of funding for Train to Gain had resulted in the College being unable to enrol any new starts until April 2010. As a consequence it was unlikely the College would be able to achieve the full year target enrolment between April and July.

The cash position would need to be managed carefully during the year with the lowest cash days in hand occurring at March. Members noted that the revolving credit facility, although currently unused was still available to call on during the year if needed.

Members noted the report.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

Members reviewed the recommendations made by the Standing Committees of the Board prior to the meeting. The Board considered each recommendation in turn and passed the following resolutions:

Audit

- **The Board approve the Learner Involvement Strategy**
- **The Board note the annual assessment of the Committee.**

Finance and Resources

- **The Board approve the Fees Policy for 2010/11**
- **The Board note the annual assessment of the Committee.**

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

13. UPDATE ON MERGER PROPOSAL

A confidential minute was produced for this item.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS

In accordance with section 17(2) of the Instrument of Government, members determined that the report and discussion under item 13 would remain confidential due to commercial sensitivity.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETNG

The date of the next scheduled meeting of the Board was noted as Wednesday 17 March 2010.

16. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The minutes of the committee meetings were noted by the Board.

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.40pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____