

**Minutes of Norton Radstock College Governing Body Meeting
held on Wednesday 18 March 2009**

Present:	Mr J Wilkinson (Chair)	JW
	Mrs S Arayan (Principal)	SA
	Ms S Barter	SB
	Mrs J Clifford (until 8pm)	JCI
	Mr J Cocks	JC
	Mr C Dando	CD
	Mr D Evans (until 8.30pm)	DE
	Mrs L Gillick	LG
	Mr N Hartley	NH
	Miss N Holloway-Attwood	NHA
	Mr R Newbery	RN
	Dr D Protheroe	DP
	Mrs J Stiddard	JS
	Dr A Thomas	AT
	Mr K Willcox	KW
	Mr R Wynn Jones	RWJ
In Attendance:	Ms J Barber (Finance Director)	JB
	Mr J Chudley (until 7.10pm)	JCh
	Mr P Hodgson (Corporate Director)	PH
	Mr J Holland (Clerk)	JH
	Mr A Ormerod (Academic Director)	AO
	Miss R Williams	RW

The Chair welcomed JCh and RW to the meeting.

Presentation by John Chudley, Area Director West of England LSC for information

Mr Chudley gave the meeting a presentation to update on the following issues:

- His new role with the Apprenticeship service.
- The movement of staff from the LSC to the new funding agencies and the role of the new agencies.
- The development of Local Authority clusters and their role in funding colleges.
- The difficulty in revising the process if there was a change of Government in 2010.
- Update on the Capital process with demand outstripping availability of funds.

Mr Chudley took questions and the Chair thanked him for coming to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**

Apologies had been received from Nadine Spong who had an evening event at B6. There were no declarations of interests.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2. **Minutes of Governing Body meeting held on 28 January 2009 for approval**

JS proposed the Minutes be approved, this was seconded by CD and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

The meeting noted the matters arising sheet. SA updated the meeting that in respect of the new Unit at Wellsway Works, she had obtained 2 year's rent plus around £10k for internal refurbishment.

A decision has been made on the prison contract but this needs to be confirmed by the LSC nationally. There were at least two other tenders for the Mary Carpenter Unit work.

4. **Draft Minutes of Quality meeting held on 17 February 2009 for information and matters arising**

The meeting noted the Minutes.

The main points note were:

- Detailed update on the Essential Skills problems being made to the next Quality meeting.
- Covalent was proving to be a useful tool to the College.
- SA clarified that the special measures was an internal action with the College deciding its duration.
- Rationale for the new Head of School within Essential Skills and the split of responsibilities.

The Chair wanted the College to work on updating the expected success rates for 2008/2009 as soon as possible and any update on this to be circulated to Governors.

Action: AO GB3091

5. **Draft Minutes of Management Accounts Review Group meeting held on 2 March 2009 for information and matter arising**

The meeting noted the Minutes. The Chair wanted to arrange a date for the Governors Strategy day with the focus to be on what happens to funding after 2009/2010.

The meeting agreed to meet on Wednesday 29 April at 2pm.

6. **Draft Minutes of Student Forum meeting held on 5 March 2009 for information and matters arising**

The meeting noted the Minutes.

Members who attended the meeting confirmed they had found it a very good meeting which was positive and constructive.

It was noted that the NUS were happy to visit the College to advise on a Student Union and the working of the Forum.

There was concern over the problems with student email contact. AT outlined the system being used at Bath Spa University. PH agreed to liaise with the College IT team over this as well as liaising with Bath Spa University over their solution. It was thought it might be an HE scheme.

Action: PH GB3092

SA informed the meeting that a review of what was needed from the College Counselling Service would be undertaken following the recent resignation of the College Counsellor. A decision would be made by the next meeting.

Action: SA GB3093

7. **Draft Minutes of Academic Board Meeting held on 5 March 2009 for information and matters arising**

The Minutes were noted.

AO outlined the main purpose of the meeting was to agree the Curriculum Offer for 2009/2010 together with presentations on the Foundation Learning Tier and Functional Skills.

There were specific reasons for the staff absences from the meeting.

The meeting queried the large number of students accessing the Counselling service. A lot of this related to drug taking with three students having been dismissed. The use of a horse tranquilliser, Ketamine, was especially prevalent in the rural areas and the College had been able to get a swift police response to any incidents.

DECISION/INFORMATION ITEMS

8. Principal's Report for information to include student numbers

The Principal took the meeting through her report which was noted.

With regard to the Capital Bid, the questions the College answered will form the basis of a paper that will go to the National Capital Committee of the LSC where projects will be prioritised on need. The College is canvassing support of the local MP and Local Authority etc.

It was clarified that a student had died in an accident on 24 February and a member of staff remained in a critical condition.

The meeting noted the paper that detailed the loan commitment if the Capital project was phased over 5 years which was not affordable on that basis. The project was not affordable on that basis.

The meeting went through in detail the demand led funding summary for student numbers.

The meeting was concerned that Governors were still not understanding fully the detail of the report. It was agreed that JW and CD would work with College Management to look at improving the sheet for future consumption.

Action: JW/CD/SA GB3094

Concern was also expressed at the shortfall being shown on Adult ER and Apprenticeships at this stage of the year. Both remain challenging budgets which College Management are working towards.

J Clifford left the meeting.

9. Accommodation

Verbal Update on Capital Bid for information

This had already been discussed earlier in the meeting. The LSC were now looking at prioritising the 79 bids that were at AiP stage. There was a substantial over-commitment within the programme and it may be June/July before the prioritisation was completed. PH reported that the College had committed £65k to get the project to AiP on project management and survey work.

Concern was expressed about the state of the old building and SA confirmed that the LSC had agreed to do a health and safety audit on the building.

10. Finance

i. **Management Accounts for January 2009 for information**

JB took the meeting through her report, detailing the changes to income and its effect on cashflow. She highlighted that the minimum cash balance was projected as £126k in w/e 9 April 2009. Barclays Bank had been consulted over an overdraft facility but their advice on the figures presented was that the position looked manageable. JB explained to the meeting that there is a facility that can be used to convert to a lease £50k of our capital spend in 2008/2009.

The meeting wanted MARG to meet to monitor the cashflow and look at having a plan B in place for the current dip in cash reserves.

Upon query, PH explained that the franchise fee had been set at a maximum level with Templegate Training for 2008/2009 but they had agreed to do more students for this fee in order to secure business for next year.

Although the College was down on the ER learner profile, we were doing well in relation to other colleges.

Upon query, there was no concern over non payment by debtors but the meeting wanted efforts to be made to secure quicker payment if possible. The LSC portal shows £84k due for Train to Gain Capacity building funds and we are trying to clarify if we will actually receive this sum. This was the funding JB had queried John Chudley about earlier in the meeting. This was currently not included in the Management Accounts Report.

DE now left the meeting.

ii. **Risk Management update for information and approve policy**

JB explained this report was to update Governors on progress made and an updated Risk Management Policy for approval.

The meeting noted the progress made and that the Risk Register had been transferred to the new Covalent software.

JB took the meeting through her changes to the Risk Management Policy.

The meeting noted the top ten risks. It was agreed that the scoring would be broken down into three components, likelihood/impact/mitigation.

The meeting queried why the top ten risks were mostly financial. This was because other areas had mitigated their risk level and so did not fall into the top ten. It was agreed that the next meeting would receive a report on other corporate level risks.

Action: JB GB3095

The meeting wanted some thought to go into how Governors could get involved in developing the process of risk management and the reporting of this to them.

JS proposed the Risk Management Policy be approved, this was seconded by CD and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

JB now wanted the meeting to go back to the conversation of possible Capital spend into a lease. She asked for this to be approved.

RN proposed that, if needed, £50k of the Capital spend in 2008/2009 could be converted into a lease, this was seconded by CD and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

11. Personnel

i. Approve discretion under College Sick Pay Scheme

It was agreed to hold this item over to the end of the meeting.

GOVERNANCE/MANAGEMENT

12. Report on use of the Corporation Seal for information

This was noted by the meeting.

13. Equality and Diversity Impact Measures on student population for information

The meeting was not clear on what the report was telling them and asked if the Quality Committee could look at it in more detail at the next meeting. This was unanimously agreed.

Action: RN/JH GB3096

14. Update on Governing Body membership for information

The report was noted.

15. Governor Training for information

JW informed the meeting that the joint event with Bath had been arranged for 20 April 2009 at Bath College from 6pm to 8pm and was being organised

by AOC South West and, although aimed at West of England colleges, it is open to other colleges to attend. The Chair encouraged Governors to attend and to book through Alison Barlow.

16. **Any other business**

There was no further business.

LG, NHA and RW left the meeting.

See separate sheet for confidential item.

The meeting closed at 9pm