

**Minutes of Norton Radstock College Governing Body Meeting
held on Wednesday 20 May 2009**

Present:	Mr J Wilkinson (Chair)	JW
	Mrs S Arayan (Principal)	SA
	Ms S Barter	SB
	Ms J Clifford	JC
	Mr D Evans (from 7.05pm)	DE
	Mrs L Gillick	LG
	Miss N Holloway-Attwood	NHA
	Mr R Newbury	RN
	Dr D Protheroe	DP
	Mr K Willcox	KW
	Miss R Williams	RW
	Mr R Wynn-Jones	RWJ
In Attendance:	Ms J Barber (Finance Director)	JB
	Mr P Hodgson (Corporate Director)	PH
	Mr J Holland (Clerk)	JH
	Mr A Ormerod (Academic Director) (until 8.20pm)	AO

The Chair referred the meeting to the recommendation of the Search and Nomination Committee on page 19 of the papers that Rosie Williams be approved as a Student Governor. He proposed that this should be approved, this was seconded by KW and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

The Chair welcomed RW to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Chris Dando, Nigel Hartley, Nadine Spong, Julie Stiddard and Alun Thomas.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Key Topic - New Inspection Regime for information

The meeting noted the paper and the additional notes SA had prepared for the meeting listing five of the expected changes.

The final framework has gone through several drafts and is due for publication in July 2009 when the impact for the Governing Body can more clearly be assessed. The meeting agreed that it would be useful to look at point 3, 'Leaders to demonstrate how we might raise expectations and promote ambition' at the next meeting.

Action: SA GB5091

The meeting expressed some concerns about the 20 days report publication if there are still appeals pending. JW agreed to pursue this through the AOC Board.

Action: JW GB5092

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3. **Minutes of Governing Body meeting held on 18 March 2009 for approval**

KW proposed the Minutes be approved, this was seconded by RJW and unanimously approved by the meeting.

4. **Matters arising**

The meeting noted the matters arising sheet.

Enquiries of local Colleges showed that none out of 9 respondents took discretionary decisions on their sick pay schemes to their Corporations.

SA agreed to bring a proposal back to the next meeting to deal with discretionary areas in the sick pay scheme.

Action: SA GH5093

SA informed the meeting that a new College Counsellor had been appointed. There were no other matters the meeting wished to discuss.

5. **Minutes of Search and Nomination Committee meeting held on 6 May 2009 for information and to approve recommendation**

The other recommendation from the meeting is that Nadine Spong is reappointed as Academic Staff Governor. This was proposed by RWJ, seconded by RN and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

6. **Minutes of Management Accounts Review Group meeting held on 11 May 2009 for information**

The Management Accounts would be reviewed later in the agenda.

JB explained that the meeting had been concerned about cashflow in the first three months of the next academic year. She had done some projections for August to October 2009 and all months had projected cash balances of over £600k based on LSC funding being profiled on the same basis as last year.

The meeting noted the Minutes.

DECISION/INFORMATION ITEMS

7. Principal's Report (including Learner Numbers) for information

The Principal took the meeting through her Report and there were no more recent bids to report. A larger 16-18 allocation has been made for next year which compensates for reduced E2E allocations.

The College has secured the Prison contract but with a third less funding; this will mean less teaching hours.

The DWP scheme mentioned should read for people out of work for 6 months or more and is a referral scheme handled by Job Centre Plus covering the West of England, but it is expected the referrals will be more local.

The Principal informed the meeting that both RN and JW had held discussions with David Grant and the new student numbers reporting sheet was on page 26 with the old version on page 27 of the papers. RN explained the topic was a difficult one to tabulate. It was hoped to be able to do year on year comparisons but this was not possible due to the continued changes in the funding methodology. The meeting noted that the main problems were on the 19+ Employer Responsive and Apprenticeships.

The College is suffering because there is no virement allowed between the funding streams. The other area of concern is the lack of Apprenticeships being offered by both public and private concerns locally. The suggestion of badging some College staff as Apprenticeships is not practicable as they already have the appropriate level of qualifications.

8. Verbal update on Capital Bid for information

PH updated the meeting on the Capital Bid. Overall, bids from colleges had been made for over twice the money made available by the Government. The LSC has appointed Consultants to handle the process going forward, who will be working between now and the end of July on prioritising applications. A lot of the discussions have been around readiness to start, and the additional £300 million allocated by Government in the Budget will go to projects that can start immediately.

The College had been active in canvassing support from key stakeholders as evidenced by the letter of support from the Chief Executive of Bath and North East Somerset Council which SA had circulated to Governors.

The College will be returning a new set of proformas to the LSC and we should score well on the criteria being used. The College is expecting to hear a decision by the end of July 2009.

The LSC has agreed to pay £53k back to the College on professional fees incurred at the agreed support level of 81%.

If we have a positive decision in July, it may be possible to have contractors on site in January 2010, but this is a demanding timetable.

A January 2010 start could provide a marketing opportunity.

The College remains confident about the bid, but the meeting re-emphasised that it was not prepared to proceed with the project without formal approval.

9. Finance

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

JB took the meeting through her report highlighting the main issues.

She referred the meeting to table 4.1.1 in the Report, tabling the increase in 16-18 funding for 2009-2010.

She took the meeting through paragraph 4.1.2 which explained the change in rules on Train to Gain and the poor recruitment on Apprenticeship. These combined are forecast to give a shortfall of £363k to budget.

The meeting noted that the financial strategy of increasing 16-18 learners should put us in a better position for 2009/2010.

The forecast deficit for 2008/2009 is now £192k although the College will do what it can in the balance of the year to minimise this.

The meeting noted the reasons for savings on variable hours as detailed in paragraph 4.4.2.

JB took the meeting through the cashflow variance of £595k in hand against the budgeted figure of £392k and the meeting noted the payment of Capital money in advance for the New Diplomas.

The meeting noted with concern the level of debt owed to the College. The meeting asked the College to look at the possibility of using a payment on account methodology for school link invoices for next year.

Action: JB GB5094

Upon query, JB informed the meeting that the forecast deficit would use up approximately 10% of our general reserves. The meeting was concerned that the projected deficit would impact on bank loan covenants. JB explained that this would not be known until the

Financial Accounts for 2008/2009 were complete but she would look at predicting any effect as soon as practicable.

Action: JB GB5095

The meeting noted the report.

ii. **Update on Risk Management for information**

JB explained that this report was to inform Governors of risks categorised at a Corporate level as opposed to the top ten risks seen earlier which all had a financial element to them. Below these exist a whole raft of departmental risks. The meeting asked if the titles were able to be printed on each sheet if this report came to Governors again. JB agreed to follow up.

Action: JB GB5096

JB confirmed that a future review date is on the system for each risk and all risks are reviewed at least annually.

The meeting concluded that a lot of the risks that could not be mitigated were due to the LSC and its decision making processes.

The paper was noted.

10. **Health and Safety**

i. **Minutes of Environmental Sub Group Meeting held on 12 March 2009 for information**

The meeting noted the Minutes and that Kevin Connell was working towards a Gold Level Award for the College. It was also noted that £40k in grants had been received for energy saving initiatives.

The meeting was pleased to see the involvement of the Student Forum in putting forward environmental solutions at their March 2009 meeting.

ii. **Minutes of Health and Safety meeting held on 27 March 2009 for information**

Governors were concerned about the poor attendance at the meeting and maybe it was appropriate to have new representatives on the Committee.

PH agreed to report attendance at the Health and Safety meetings over the last two years.

Action: PH GB5097

The meeting discussed the provision of personal protective equipment and awaited the College approach on this with regard to charging in course fees.

The Minutes were noted.

GOVERNANCE/MANAGEMENT

11. Notes from Strategic Planning session held on 29 April 2009 for information

These notes were noted. The meeting thanked SA for her summation of the event.

12. Update on projected success rates for 2008/2009 for information

AO took the meeting through the report explaining the calculation of retention, achievement and success rates. The Governors had targeted the College with achieving 78% success rate for the current year and these projections were showing this. With the College putting in support mechanisms for students who are not succeeding, this target should be met with areas such as B6 and Animal Care expecting to improve on their projection.

The importance of success rates was emphasised as they have an impact on the funding calculation.

The report was noted.

13. Peer Review of Chair of Governors for discussion

The meeting noted the review document but thought it should be linked to other documents such as Chair role, Chair's Job Description etc. It was agreed to find a Chair's Job Description to approve before the review was done in the Autumn.

JH to find a model Job Description.

Action: JH GB5098

AO left the meeting.

14. Analysis of compliments/concerns/complaints for information

SA took the meeting through the report which was noted.

15. Proposed meeting calendar for 2009/2010 for information

The dates were noted.

16. **Use of Corporation Seal for information**

The use of the Seal was noted.

17. **Any other business**

SA informed the meeting that the College had looked at a checklist and the risk management implications for swine flu.

RWJ highlighted he had found the article on Leadership and Technology in the recently circulated LSIS Governance Newsletter very interesting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.