

**Minutes of Norton Radstock College Governing Body meeting
held on Wednesday 8 December 2010 at 6.50pm**

Present:	Mr C Dando (Chair)	CD
	Mrs S Arayan (Principal)	SA
	Mrs J Clifford	JC
	Mr P Kendall	PK
	Mrs J Stiddard	JS
	MS L Strawbridge	LS
	Dr A Thomas	AT
	Mr K Willcox	KW
	Mr J Wilkinson	JW
	Mr R Wynn-Jones	RWJ
In Attendance:	Ms J Barber (Finance Director)	JB
	Mr P Hodgson (Corporate Director)	PH
	Mrs C Bamford (Clerk)	CB
	Mr A Ormerod (Academic Director)	AO

CD thanked JW for his leadership of the Corporation and commented that he hopes his long apprenticeship of Vice-Chair will serve him well as he steps into the role of Chair.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Sandra Barter, David Evans, Richard Newbery and Nadine Spong.

There were no declarations of interests.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2. Draft Minutes of Governing Body meeting held on 13 October 2010 for approval

PK proposed the Minutes be approved, this was seconded by SA and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

3. Matters arising

The matters arising sheet was noted.

RWJ asked if governors were able to see the objectives set for the Senior Management Team. It was decided that these would be only be sent to those Governors that wanted to see them.

Action : SA GB12101

The absence report was noted. CD asked if absences could be looked at in a more detailed way and a narrative added to detail support provided and if the employee had returned to work.

Action : SA GB12102

4. **Draft Minutes of Search and Nomination Committee meeting held on 7 December 2010 for information and to approve recommendations**

JS explained that the Search and Nomination Committee had interviewed three potential Student Governors – Amy Coles, Kayleigh Deverill and Amy O'Neill on 7 December and its recommendation was that all three be elected to the Governing Body.

The Search Committee also recommended that Chris Hounsell be elected as a new member of the Corporation and Ken Willcox be re-elected when his current term of office finishes on 13 December 2010. CB to send a letter to CH and KW.

Action : CB GB12103

RWJ proposed that these recommendations be accepted by the Corporation, this was seconded by JW and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

It was also noted that the composition of the Governing Body would need to be changed to reflect that there would now be three Student Governors. It was agreed that the College standing orders would be amended to reflect this and approved before the next Governor meeting in February.

Action : CB GB12104

5. **Draft Minutes of Quality Committee meeting held on 16 November 2010 for information**

The minutes were noted.

AO explained the issues with student retention and what is being done to try and identify students at risk. CD commented that he would like an update on this at the next Governor meeting.

Action : AO GB12105

RWJ commented that the Quality Committee would like more Governors to link with Schools. It was suggested that a list of Schools without Governors currently assigned be distributed ahead of the next Governor meeting.

Action : CB GB12106

6. **Draft Minutes of Accommodation Committee meeting held on 19 November 2010 for information**

The minutes were noted.

PH confirmed that the renewal grant would be spent by the end of March 2011 and that he would arrange another committee meeting in January once he had received a report on the tenders from King Sturge.

The meeting decided to take item 11 next.

11. **Accommodation**

i. **Update on current position re accommodation issues for information**

PH gave a verbal update. The sale of Ellsbridge house is ongoing and there are some interested parties. Horseworld are awaiting planning approval of their manor house and a decision should be through by December 15th. CD queried if we need to support Horseworld in their application and asked PH to draft a letter from the College in support of their application.

Action : PH GB12107

MAIN AGENDA

7. **Principal's Report for information including learner numbers**

SA took the meeting through her report and commented that it was not a very positive picture; generally the College needs to tighten its belt and await outcomes. SA noted that she will be advising Governors of a strategic plan in January 2011.

PH took the meeting through the commentary. He commented that 16-18 learner numbers were low against target but that the College has been working with Connexions to identify 16-18 year olds currently not in education or employment and work in partnership to re-engage them in learning through a number of vocational taster sessions in December 2010 with a view to full engagement in January 2011.

PH also noted that numbers of Adult Learner Responsive, Adult Employer Responsive and also Apprenticeships are low against targets. The impact is a severely challenging set of circumstances. The SFA expectation of colleges is that they move away from Train to Gain style activity and transfer funds to support the growth of 19+ apprenticeships.

PH commented that the College is working on a strategy to promote Apprenticeships across the B&NES area and looking at incentives to encourage greater take-up of this opportunity by employers.

PH tabled a paper of Partnership Provision

PH explained to the meeting that if the College does not reach the funding allocation of £1.4 million for 2010/2011 then this shortfall would mean a lower starting point for negotiations in 2011/2012.

PH noted that a possible solution to generate numbers and funding would be to enter into partnership with two recommended training providers, N-Gaged and The Learning Curve. PH asked Governors to approve extending our partnership provision to an additional ceiling of £350,000 on an 80/20% split.

RWJ/AT queried why providers don't go direct to the SFA themselves. RWJ queried whether it would be possible to set up a Company and enter into a joint venture. SA/PH said that setting up a separate company had a number of problems and in the past had caused some colleges to collapse.

AT asked what the length of the contract with the training provider would be, SA suggested a maximum of two years.

CD felt that a smaller group should be set up to look at the long-term relationship with the provider and also queried whether South-West colleges could group together and join with a training provider.

Action : CD GB12108

CD suggested to the meeting that the Governors agree to extend our provision with the two named providers with a contract of 1 year with an extension of 1 year if the College is happy with the quality and provision of training. This was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

CD asked SA to demonstrate at the Governor meeting in February how the College would be making savings internally.

Action : SA GB12109

8. Finance

i. Management Accounts for October 2010 for information

JB took the meeting through her report in detail which had been reviewed by the Management Accounts Review Group on 3 December 2010. In conclusion the College is in a solvent position.

ii. Agreed Audit Strategy for 2010/2011 for information

The meeting noted the Audit Strategy for 2010/2011.

iii. Top Ten Risks Report for information

The meeting noted the report.

9. **Personnel**

i. **Recommendation of pay award from 1 January 2011 for approval**

SA referred the meeting to item 7 on the MARG minutes of 3 December 2010 and confirmed that she was not in a position to advise Governors on a pay award at this stage. She commented that she will report back at the next Governing Body meeting in February when funding issues should be less uncertain. Any pay increase awarded would be backdated to Jan 2011.

ii. **Recommendation of pay award from 1 January 2011 for Principal and Clerk to the Corporation**

CD informed the meeting that the Remuneration Committee had met before this meeting and agreed that they would follow the same approach for the Principal/Clerk as the rest of the College.

The meeting unanimously agreed the above recommendations.

CD invited JW to feedback information from the AOC at this point in the meeting.

JW provided an update to the meeting. He noted that school Sixth Form funding is being reduced in line with FE so that they would be on a level playing field and there would be a transparency of performance measures. The AOC have prepared evidence on the disparity of Ofsted grades relative to success rates between schools and colleges and will present to Ofsted for feedback. JW also noted that the AOC want to keep pressure on the government regarding the EMA situation so that they might increase the money going into the alternative funding.

10. **Analysis of Compliments, Concerns and Complaints for information**

The meeting noted the report.

SA noted that there were a higher number of complaints in 2009/2010 due to issues with accountancy courses; this provision has now closed. CD queried if the Student Forum could report back if students have issues with courses so that the College can deal with situations as early as possible. SA also informed the meeting that she now has lunch once a month with a group of students from across the College.

12. **Minutes of Health and Safety Committee Meeting held on 25 November 2010 for information**

The Minutes were noted.

KW noted that he is the only Governor on the Committee and we need another member.

CD noted this and asked CB to circulate this vacancy along with sub-committee vacancies and links with Schools.

Action : CB GB121010

KW also noted that he was concerned with the welfare facilities provided for Construction students.

GOVERNANCE/MANAGEMENT

13. i. **Approve targets for 2010/2011 for retention, achievement and success**

AO explained that the Quality Committee on 16 October 2010 had reviewed the targets and recommended that they went forward for approval to the Governing Body.

AO took the meeting through the report and outlined the targets for 2010/2011 of 83% success, 90% retention and 92% achievement for the whole College. AO commented that if these targets are achieved we will be in the top 25% of colleges.

The report was noted.

RWJ commented that the information provided was very useful, measurable and comprehensive. AO noted that this was down to the hard work of Peter Skinner.

The 2010/2011 targets were unanimously agreed by the meeting.

CD queried how we measure against these targets. AO explained that he and PS meet with heads of schools on a regular basis and look at achievement on a course and individual level. CD asked if the information/trends from these meetings can be reported back to the Quality Committee.

Action : PS GB121011

ii. **Approve Self Assessment Report**

AO noted that the report has been reviewed by the Quality Committee, Academic Board and validated by an Inspector.

CD queried why the level of provision has gone down a grade. AO explained that at the time of the Ofsted inspection the judgement was that Teaching and Learning was 'Satisfactory'. In order to achieve a 'Good' grade it is important to increase the overall proportion of

observation grades and particularly to increase the number of lessons graded 'Outstanding'.

CD asked how we move forward. PH noted that the College Quality Improvement Plan details actions from the SAR. CD asked for feedback on these measures.

SA commented that she believes it would be useful for Heads of Schools to provide commentary alongside their data on a regular basis to the Quality committee.

CD proposed the Self Assessment Report be approved, this was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

iii. **Governor Self Assessment Report and Draft Quality Improvement Plan for information**

The report was noted.

A group to be set up in January to revise, complete and assign responsibility for actions.

Action : CD GB121012

iv. **Minutes of Academic Board meeting held on 4 November 2010 for information**

The Minutes were noted.

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

The Corporation Seal has not been used since the last meeting.

14. **Updated College Code of Conduct for approval**

CD proposed the updated Code of Conduct be approved, this was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

15. **Update on Student Forum for discussion**

CD updated governors that the Student Services would like to take ownership of the Student Forum. The meeting agreed that this was a good idea.

JS would like Student Services to update her on how they intend to run the Forum.

Action : PR GB121013

16. **Any Other Business**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Next meeting Wednesday 2 February at 6.30pm.