

# Northumberland College Corporation

## Governing Body

### Minutes of meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2007 at 5.30pm at Ashington

**Present:** L Ions (Chairperson)  
P Sample  
R Ellis-Jones (Principal)  
D Fleming  
M Jeans  
I Todd  
S Barlow  
N Hall

**In Attendance:** C Taylor (Clerk to the Corporation)  
I Holmes (VP Finance)  
H Wright (VP Curriculum)  
D Ferguson (to item GB07/085 only)  
L Rutherford (to item GB07/085 only)

#### **GB07/072 Preliminaries**

The Chairperson informed the meeting that DF was running late and thus items which did not require a decision to be taken by the FGB would be taken first until quoracy was achieved.

*Item 6 GB07/078 and then item 12 GB07/084 were therefore taken at this point.*

DF then joined the meeting and it was agreed that the Corporation membership be determined at the minimum number of Governors 12.

#### **GB07/073 Apologies**

Standing apologies were given for Eric Fisher. Apologies had been received from PP, DR, MR, JC, LS, DW and AF.

#### **GB07/074 Declaration of Interests**

None

#### **GB07/075 Confirmation of Quorum**

The Chairman confirmed that the meeting was quorate (the members present meeting the minimum requirement of 8).

#### **GB07/076 Minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### **GB07/077 Matters arising and not otherwise covered on the agenda**

None

#### **GB07/078 Comments from the Chair**

The Chairperson informed Governors that:-

- a) thanks had been received from PE for the gift received when he stood down as

- chairman;
- b) DR would be resigning in September due to family commitments but would still like to remain associated with the College; JC would not be seeking reappointment in November; and replacements for WL and PE would need to be sought. There was therefore a requirement to redetermine the membership of the governing body and on recommendation by the Clerk this was **agreed** and set at 12.
  - c) Governors were reminded expenses claim forms would be available at each FGB meeting.
  - d) REJ, IT and the Chairperson had attended a meeting with Carter & Carter (a training provider) who were interested in a partnership with Colleges. This was for information only.
  - e) REJ and the Chairperson had met with Ken Tonge to discuss Ashington Trust and were still trying to sort out fine details.
  - f) The Chairperson had presented long service awards to staff and year end awards to students which were well received. Thanks were expressed to those governors who also attended the award ceremonies.

REJ updated Governors on government changes and the concerns that it raises for the College noting that this was a period of great uncertainty for the LSC and the College.

*Item 11 (GB07/083) was then taken at this point followed by item 20 GB07/092 as SB had to leave the meeting.*

#### **GB07/079 HR Reports**

REJ presented the paper . The report had already been received by F&P and no comments were raised. PC to be thanked for his efforts.

REJ

#### **GB07/080 Gender Equality and Disability**

DFer presented the salient parts of the policy highlighting how staff were being trained and kept up to speed with changing policies. It was **agreed** that an update should be produced in 6 months on staff training and if any difficulties had arisen.

The Clerk mentioned that a Race Gender Equality and Disability Champion, although not required by law, would be good governance. After discussion it was suggested that PP be asked to carry on with this role if he was happy to do so. The Clerk and HW however to ensure that the Champions for GB07/080 and GB07/081 were not held solely responsible as Governors were collectively responsible for these areas. The Clerk with the assistance of HW to ensure clarity is placed within each document.

Clerk/  
HW

#### **GB07/081 Child Protection Policy**

It was noted that FH was not at the meeting to present the Policy. Concerns were expressed that some papers did not contain a report header to assist Governors in decision making. The Clerk took note and would ensure report headers were with future papers.

The Clerk and HW suggested to the meeting that the policy had been in existence for sometime and required the approval of the FGB. After discussion the policy was **agreed**. The Clerk noted that it was not policy but good practice to have a child protection champion and perhaps one of the new Governors if they have an interest could be asked to fill this position in September. If not a governor would need to be sought. Appropriate training would be required and perhaps this could be tied in with staff training.

Clerk/  
REJ/LI

### **GB07/082 Capital Expenditure Plan**

LR tabled an amendment to the Plan and LRC summaries. Governors expressed concerns as they did not know what was being required of them nor had they been given any background as to how the plan fitted with other capital expenditure programs. IH clarified the plan for Governors noting that this was an active tool . After a lengthy debate it was **agreed** that:-

- a) Governors were uncomfortable as there was no clarity on costs nor priorities;
- b) Some of the work had to be carried out this summer otherwise the College may lose out
- c) IH to email to Governors with the capital expenditure plan summarising the position;
- d) The LRC proposal(35k) and summer works(30k) be approved noting that capital reserves would be used (if necessary)with Chairs approval.
- e) The annual IT proposal would be put on hold so that Governors could make an informed decision once they had seen a program for the next 2/3 years.
- f) A breakdown on the £440,000 figure should be produced for the next meeting together with a business case and a program for replacement of computers and a long term plan.
- g) A process for approval of business cases be presented to the September meeting

IH

IH/LR

It was agreed that the Chairperson could take Chair's action on this within the parameters set by the Governing Body

### **GB07/083 Approval of budget for 2007/8 and 3yr financial forecast CONFIDENTIAL**

IH

### **GB07/084 Kirkley Hall /Learning Park and Summer Works update**

REJ updated Governors, via powerpoint, on the College estates and the national and regional challenges ahead. The Chairperson confirmed that the LSC had already received the presentation and a lot of support for the College was given and credit given to REJ. The presentation was well received by Governors.

### **GB07/085 Skills audit validation**

The Clerk was asked to write to Governors individually seeking clarity and validation of the skills audit report.

Clerk

### **GB07/086 Confidential register review**

The Clerk was asked, at future meetings, to give a verbal report on each confidential matter up for renewal so that Governors could make timely removals It was **agreed** that items 4 and 5 should remain confidential.

### **GB07/087 Cycle of business approval**

The cycle of business was approved.

### **GB07/088 Calendar of business approval**

It was noted that DF could not attend some of the meetings for next year. The Clerk to amend the calendar, if possible, but the next Corporation meeting would remain as 25<sup>th</sup> September. The calendar was approved in principal.

Clerk

### **GB07/089 Minutes of M&G meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007**

Governors approved the recommendation of the procedure to appoint Governors. The minutes were received to the meeting.

### **GB07/090 Minutes of the Learning Park committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

The minutes were received to the meeting.

**GB07/091 Minutes of F&P meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

The draft minutes were received to the meeting.

**GB07/092 Minutes of the Audit committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

SB updated Governors outlining the significant recommendations contained within the Audit Reports and concerns raised at that meeting. After a healthy discussion it was **agreed** that the recommendation put forward to tender for internal auditors in six months time followed by the external auditors six months after be put in place. SB was asked to notify the auditors in writing of this decision.

SB

**GB07/093 Minutes of the Standards committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

IT outlined the Curriculum review and 3 point plan to the meeting indicating that the timescale for completion of the curriculum review had to be completed before the September meeting. The Standards committee would therefore convene an EGM early September.

After consideration the Governors approved the recommendation to adopt the Committee and Corporation Effectiveness questionnaire as this was good practice and would allow Governors to self assess their effectiveness.

The minutes were received to the meeting.

**GB07/094 Topics for the next Corporation Meeting**

Capital expenditure programme  
IT business expenditure  
Business case process policy  
Budget update  
Curriculum review  
Learning Park update

**GB07/095 Any other Business**

None

**GB07/096 Designation of items as confidential**

The budget approval until confirmed.

**GB07/097 Date of future meeting**

The next meeting would be held on 18th September 2007.

## ACTION LIST

Reference	Content	Managers
10.7.07 GB07/080 Gender Equality etc	Update in 6 months on staff training and if any difficulties had arisen	D Fer
10.7.07 GB07/082 Capital Expenditure plan	Email all governors with capital expenditure plan summarising position  Breakdown of £440k to be produced at next meeting together with business case	IH  IH/LR
GB07/083 Budget approval	update of budget to September meeting	IH
GB07/092 Auditors	SB to write to auditors re beauty parade	SB