

Northumberland College Corporation

Governing Body

Minutes of meeting held on 22nd January 2008 at 5.30pm at Kirkley Hall

Present: L Ions (Chair)
R Ellis-Jones (Principal)
P Sample
S Barlow
I Todd,
P Pratt
M Rossi
C Smith
R Casson
J Wright
N Hall
D Fleming

In Attendance: C Taylor (Clerk)
C Jennings (to GB08/009 only)
I Holmes (VP Finance)
H Wright (VP Curriculum)
M Jinks (to GB08/010 only)

GB08/001 Apologies and introductions

Standing apologies were given for Eric Fisher. Apologies had been received for M Jeans, L Scott, Z Lethbridge, L Gazzani.

The Governors introduced themselves for the benefit of new members. Since this was PP's last meeting the Corporation expressed their considerable gratitude to PP for his service over the years.

GB08/002 Declaration of Interests

None.

GB08/003 Confirmation of Quorum

The Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate (the members present meeting the minimum requirement of 5).

GB08/004 Minutes of the last meeting dated 18th December 2007

The minutes were confirmed as true and accurate with the exception that NH's name should be added to "Present".

GB08/005 Matters arising and not otherwise covered on the agenda

GB07/141 LI confirmed that she had checked the wording.

GB07/142 The Clerk confirmed that new governors had been sent a list of dates and names.

GB07/144 IH confirmed that planning permission was required.

GB08/006 Comments from the Chair

The Chair informed Governors of the Governors Retreat. The event would start earlier on Friday and finish earlier on Saturday. Chris Roberts from the LSC would be there to give a presentation on Friday and would join Governors for dinner.

GB08/007 Comments from the Principal

The Principal confirmed that a renewables stakeholder event had been held and backing had been received for the ideas. A steering group would be formed to move matters forward.

GB08/008 Communications Strategy

CJ presented the tabled paper by giving a presentation to Governors. After discussion it was proposed that thought should be given to marketing to different audiences, particularly as those in transition from school to College were a captive audience .

Thanks were expressed to CJ for his efforts so far.
The paper was endorsed with the SMT to consider the costings associated as part of budget setting

GB08/009 Minimum levels of performance

The background on the topic was given by the Principal for the benefit of new Governors who further explained that she was anxious to bring this to governors because potentially there could be a problems here. MJi presented the paper indicating that investigations into the figures were still ongoing.

MJi

Governors expressed their concerns with tabled papers indicating that this was not the way forward because effective judgments could not be made. It was noted that the College had to raise the level of performance and ensure that internal procedures were in place to ensure that results were entered onto the system in a timely fashion.

The paper was received for information and the areas of concern were noted. It was agreed that an update (if any) should be made before the Retreat.

GB08/010 Re-forecasting of the accounts

IH presented explaining why the paper required approval. Governors raised questions on the figures and discussed operating surplus and franchising costs. The Chair mentioned that the F&P Committee had agreed to a short term increase in Franchising provision because of current circumstances.. Benchmarking was seen as a good management tool and was the way forward.

The Governors asked that the SMT reconsider the operating surplus to achieve a breakeven position and IH felt that this could be achieved and the report would be amended before submission to the LSC

IH

After a healthy discussion it was agreed that the revised forecast be accepted subject to the amendment of operating surplus and a narrative should be attached. It was noted that the Retreat would be an ideal place to look at bench marking.

GB08/011 Capital Expenditure

IH reported and after consideration the paper was received.

GB08/012 New Build Update CONFIDENTIAL

GB08/013 Future of the Farms

The Principal presented the paper drawing attention to the problems identified. The recommendations were agreed and the Farm Recovery Plan should be produced at the next F&P meeting for consideration.

Clerk

GB08/014 Review of confidential register

Governors considered the paper and confirmed that the following could be placed within the public domain:-

Clerk

GB06/178 Restructuring
GB07/007 AAV Visit
GB07/049 Pay award

All other matters were to remain confidential for a further 12 months. The Clerk is to update the website, minutes etc.

GB08/015 Committee Effectiveness findings

Since this was a very large paper requiring extensive discussion it was agreed that the paper should be taken to the Retreat for discussion by Governors.

GB08/016 Minutes of F&P Committee held on 8th January 2008

The salient parts of the meeting especially franchising were highlighted. The Chair confirmed that all committee chairs should submit an annual report in July. The minutes were received to the meeting.

GB08/017 Minutes of the High Gain Board held on 9th January 2008

PP highlighted the two proposals that had come out of the meeting:-

1. There be a restructure at Kirkley Hall
2. The Board becomes a commercial board and acts as a facility to report

It was noted that there were governance issues here and a paper should be produced to the March meeting.

High
Gain
Chair

GB08/018 Draft Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 15th January 2008

IT brought Governors' attention to the SAR gradings. After a healthy discussion Governors agreed to accept the gradings and validate and endorse that these are the grades that should be placed on the website. IT confirmed that there would be an action plan in March.

GB08/019 Topics for the next Corporation Meeting

1. SAR
2. New Build
3. 14-19 dipolmas update

It was noted that Learner Involvement scheduled for the next meeting would be produced at the May meeting since MR would not be attending the seminar until the end of March

GB08/020 Any other business

None

GB08/021 Designation of items of confidential if required

Items GB08/009 The minimum levels of performance and GB08/012 the New Build are to remain confidential.

GB08/022 Date of future meeting

The next meeting will be held on 12th March 2008.

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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
18.12.07 GB08/019 Matters arising	Update to Learner involvement in May 2008.	MR/DF
22.1.08 GB08/009	Update to be made on Minimum levels of performance before the Retreat	M Jinks
22.1.08 GB08/010	IH to amend re-forecasting of the accounts to take account of operating surplus	IH
22.1.08 GB08/013	Farm Recovery Plan to be on next F&P agenda	Clerk
22.1.08 GB08/014	Confidential matters to be placed in the public domain	Clerk
22.1.08 GB08/017	High Gain governance issues – paper to be produced by High Gain Chair to March Corporation meeting	High Gain Chair
22.1.08 GB08/019	Topics for next agenda – SAR, New Build, 14-19 diplomas	Clerk