



CORPORATION MEETING

Wednesday 1 April 2009 at 5.30 pm in Room 110, Science Park Campus, Kings Hedges Road Road, Cambridge

MINUTES

Present

Christopher Spokes (Chair)	Vernice Key
David Adamson	Amanda Last
Reza Assadi	Vicky Parrett
Tony Cooper	Alex Plant
Rick Dearing	Jill Preston
Andrew Herbert	Barry Popplewell
Ann Kent	Raymond Tait

In attendance

Chris Lang
Chris Sherwin
Steve Caley
Andrea Chilton [from 6.15 pm]
Julia Kennedy

Clerk

Before the meeting began the Chair spoke about Aaron Cook, whose funeral had taken place earlier in the week, and Aaron's contribution as Student Governor. The Chair then asked the Principal to provide an update on the LSC capital programme. Rick Dearing summarised the difficulties, which will impact on the availability of LSC revenue as well as capital and mean, overall, there is increased uncertainty around funding. Local colleges that are badly affected by the halt in the capital programme include Huntingdonshire Regional College and CoWA.

Section 1: General		Action
1	Declaration of Interest	Christopher Spokes declared his interest as a Partner of Bidwells who act as Planning Supervisor for the Single Site Project. David Adamson declared his interest as a voluntary advisor to Citylife, and Vernice Key declared an interest as an official of the City Council in matters relating to CityLife. Alex Plant declared his interest as Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Horizons potentially involved in funding the ICE Project.

2	Apologies for absence	Apologies were received from Paul Smith. Benito Walsh was unable to attend.	
3	Minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2009	The Minutes were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chair.	
4	Matters arising from the minutes	There were no matters arising.	
Section 2: Matters for Decision and Information			Action
5	COR/19/08-9 Principal's Report	<p>The Principal's report covered—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of Strategic and Business Plans 2008/09 and updated Risk Register • Property Update • Actions from Corporation Away Day: 16 January 2009 <p>The report included two appendices—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Against Targets 08/09 • Review of Risk and Opportunity. <p>The College was performing well overall against the business plan. Income allocations and targets generally were being met although there was some work to do on adult learner responsive funding. Partnerships with schools were very strong. A proposal to DCSF had been made to run a world class diploma centre, on behalf of the local schools, within the ARU nurse training centre at Addenbrookes. The College was intending to bid for the Northstowe 16-19 provision, and the proposal [with the business plan] would be presented to the next meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee.</p>	

		<p>Governors discussed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need for a sensitivity assessment of Train to Gain funding in view of a possible change of government; Governors noted that the skills agenda was a key priority for both parties • the business model for the diploma centre at Addenbrookes: CRC would receive an payment per learner from schools proportionate to the time each of their learners spends at centre and would receive government revenue for CRC learners at the centre; the model is similar to the SmartLIFE centre, where the building was funded by the local authority with the College meeting the running costs from ongoing activities • the need to record the potential risk to the college’s international business from visa changes and world economic conditions; Governors noted that, currently, international is out- performing budget. <p>Governors noted that campus developments were on time and on budget, with the Sports Hall in use, the Motor Vehicle building being opened after Easter, and the Hair & Beauty and Catering & Hospitality building in use by September. Events are scheduled that hopefully include a Royal Opening in the autumn, celebrations to mark the CRC 21st anniversary, and the closure of City Centre campus. Details are to be circulated to governors with invitations to the events.</p> <p>Purchase of the City site to the west of the EDF sub station had been finalised with 48% immediately sold on to Citylife. The College is exploring a number of small leases for specialist use to ensure a footprint in the areas served. Governors asked about the efficiency of such “satellite sites”. A new date is being arranged for Governors to follow up on Employer Responsive from the Away Day in April/May once LSC funding allocations are confirmed.</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Horizons funding support has been earmarked for the scaled down ICE project, subject to a detailed business case from the County Council; Governors noted the need to mitigate risk by further work on the project design and definition. Corporation resolved that the Estates Working Group would meet as soon as information was available from the City Council [the project sponsor].</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>VP Finance and Resources/Clerk</p>
	<p>Corporation Minutes 01.04.09</p>		<p>3</p>

6	<p>COR/20/08-9 CRC: Outline for a Five-Year Vision</p>	<p>Rick Dearing explained that the vision was draft, provided as a basis for discussion, and not yet brought within the ambit of the strategic plan. The paper builds on the work done at the Away Day on 14-19 and Employer Responsive provision. The environmental changes were discussed with the College Planning Group and the Vice Principals then worked with their teams to propose prime areas of focus. The paper sets out—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context [in which CRC operates] • CRC’s Response • Vision: Key Elements • Vision: Key Areas [14-19, Employer-Responsive Training, Other Education and Training for Adults, Higher Education, International Students and Programmes]. <p>Governors discussed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impact of the reduction in the ALS budget on vulnerable learners and on CRC expenditure with community-based social firms; the intention is to work more closely with the new Director of Community and Social Care at the County Council in this area • opportunities presented by the economic situation, not only to respond to redundancy and retraining, but also to position the College to be part of the uplift post-recession, for example in Construction and Sustainability • developing new relationships with both schools and employers • importance of the planning process in remaining “fleet of foot” and “not tuning too finely” in order to respond to rapidly changing circumstances • risk management, particularly in relation to international provision • “ring fencing” international provision [use of a company vehicle for this purpose will be considered in the budget proposals for 2009/10] • the potential for securing alternative sources of income, for example private sector sponsorship for disadvantaged groups. <p>Chris Lang undertook to provide information on the percentage of income not publicly funded and to provide comparative data from the FE sector.</p> <p>Corporation resolved that the vision is integrated into the Strategic Plan and distributed to Governors ahead of the next meeting of the Corporation.</p> <p><i>David Adamson left the meeting during this agenda item at 6.45 pm.</i></p>	<p>VP Finance and Resources</p> <p>Principal</p>
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7	<p>COR/21/08-9 Cambridge Regional College Publication Scheme</p>	<p>Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the College is required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme as a commitment to routinely and proactively provide information to the public. The College's Publication Scheme has been reviewed and updated to take account of recommendations of the Information Commissioner's Office [ICO] and will be submitted to ICO for approval.</p> <p>Corporation approved the updated Cambridge Regional College Publication Scheme.</p>	VP Finance and Resources
8	<p>Finance & Resources Committee</p> <p>8.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2009</p> <p>8.2 Management Accounts Period 7 2008/9 for the month of February 2009</p>	<p>Corporation received and noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on 24 February 2009. Barry Popplewell provided a summary of the meeting: there were 2 key points—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a reduction in the headline surplus mainly due to a fall in interest received • the decision to put forward a budget for 2009/10 that is conservative and defensive against the anticipated uncertainties. <p><u>8.2 Management Accounts</u></p> <p>Chris Lang reported that the Committee had discussed at length the operational risks and strategies to manage effectively in the current environment.</p> <p>Governors asked about the impact of results-based payment, whether any compensation would be received for over performance, non-pay savings, whether staff are aware of the need to cut back, and noted that each vacancy was being carefully reviewed.</p>	

8.3	<p>COR/22/08-9 Matters for decision referred from the Finance & Resources Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Policy Framework for 2009/10 Budget, including Timetable ii. LSC Funding Methodology and Allocations for 2009/10 iii. College Fees Strategy and Regulations 2009/10 and Fee Income Targets iv. College Financial Regulations v. Sports and Social Club and Student Union Accounts 	<p><u>8.3 Matters for decision referred from the Committee</u> (i) (ii) and (iii) were considered together. The LSC allocations demonstrated the results of strong negotiation by the College: there was additional funding for 16-18 and Apprenticeships, providing an increase of £1 million against the current year, subject to performance in 2009/10. A number of reconciliation points remained, including funding for the new diplomas. In relation to item (iv), the College Financial Regulations incorporate a number of administrative changes but no policy changes.</p> <p>Corporation received the Management Accounts February 2009 and noted the reduction in forecast surplus. Corporation noted the LSC Funding Methodology and Allocations for 2009/10, and approved—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Framework for the 2009/10 Budget, including Timetable • College Fees Strategy and Regulations 2009/10 and Fee Income Targets • College Financial Regulations as amended • Sports and Social Club and Students Union Accounts as presented. <p>In approving the Financial Regulations, Corporation requested that a summary of the levels of financial delegation is incorporated in the regulations and included in the Governors' Handbook.</p> <p><i>Vernice Key left the meeting during this agenda item at 7.10 pm.</i></p>	VP Finance and Resources/ Clerk
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<p>9</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p>	<p>Audit Committee</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2009</p> <p>COR/23/08-9 Matters for decision referred from the Audit Committee:</p> <p>i. Appointment of External Audit Services</p>	<p>Corporation <u>received</u> and <u>noted</u> the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 11 March 2009.</p> <p>Raymond Tait reported that the four internal audit reports received by the Committee were all good and covered—Cleaning and Security, Train to Gain, Strategic and Medium Term Planning, and Key Controls. The report on outstanding actions was down to a modest list thanks to the work undertaken by Chris Lang and Charlotte Skinner. After a rigorous selection process, Tenon were recommended as External Auditors. No changes were recommended to the terms of reference of the Committee.</p> <p>In relation to the selection of the external auditors, Chris Lang confirmed the need to engage different firms for internal audit and for the financial statements [external audit]. Corporation <u>approved</u>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appointment of Tenon to provide external audit services for a five year period 2008/09 to 2012/13 • terms of reference of the Audit Committee without amendment. <p><i>Jill Preston left the meeting at the end of this agenda item at 7.23 pm.</i></p>	<p>VP Finance and Resources</p>
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<p>10</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p> <p>10.3</p>	<p>Learning & Achievement Committee</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2009</p> <p>COR/24/08-9 Report from the Learning & Achievement Committee</p> <p>COR/25/08-9 Recommendations from the Learning & Achievement Committee</p>	<p>Corporation received and noted the Minutes of the Learning and Achievement Committee meeting on 18 March 2009.</p> <p>Chris Sherwin tabled a corrected replacement page [Appendix 1] to the Committee’s Report. The only area where there had been any slippage was student satisfaction. While the results were better than last year they were not yet on target. The success rate picture was complex: there was slippage on long and short on a simplistic aggregation, but the three year trend remained significantly upward based on the learning area weighted success rates. Most areas have significantly improved their weighted success rates year on year, with good progress on long qualifications across the curriculum.</p> <p>Governors discussed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which improvement can be maintained • success rate methodology, weighted rates, and whether rebalancing is needed in some areas <p>and noted that—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff shortages have now been resolved in almost every area • long success rates on long level 3 were being improved in accordance with the Ofsted recommendation. <p>Corporation noted the recommendations of the Committee in relation to Strategic Aims 1 and 3 as set out in the paper, and noted that—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the College has an appropriate Child Protection Policy and Procedure, which is being effectively implemented • good progress is being made against the key actions agreed at the Governors’ Away Day with regard to 14–19 activity • appropriate actions are being taken to mitigate against key risk factors relating to the achievement of Key Corporate Aims 1 and 2. 	
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<p>11</p> <p>11.1</p> <p>11.2</p>	<p>Search Committee</p> <p>Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 March 2009</p> <p>Amendments to the Standing Orders</p>	<p>The Minutes of the Search Committee meeting held the previous Friday were tabled together with the Standing Orders showing the proposed changes. Corporation received and noted the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 March 2009.</p> <p>Alex Plant reported on the meeting that had considered the most effective size for the Corporation, and whether there should be a reduction in the number of External Members, timing of recruiting to the vacancy for Student Governor, and the extension of the term of office for two Members.</p> <p>In relation to student representation, Governors discussed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment, including the potential to recruit one representative via the Student Union and one from the Student Liaison Committee • term of office: whether to commence in September or January • attendance and the possible use of substitutes, incentives, and “shadowing” • providing options for ways in which Student Governors can contribute • training and the use of mentors • benefits of one-to-one meetings with the Chair of the Learning and Achievement Committee • value of an exit interview. <p>Corporation approved—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduction in the number of External Members of the Corporation from 13 to 11, to provide a total of 16 Members • consequential changes to the Standing Orders of the Corporation, and an additional amendment at 5.11 as set out in the tabled version • the vacancy for Student Governor, caused by the death of Aaron Cook, being left unfilled for the remainder of the academic year • extension of the term of office of Reza Assadi, Staff Governor, for a further term of four years to January 2013 • extension of the term of office of Anne Kent, External Governor, for a further term of four years to September 2013. 	<p>Clerk</p>
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Section 3:			
12	Calendar of Meetings 2009/10	Corporation approved the calendar of meetings for 2009/10 and noted that minor changes may be necessary.	Clerk
13	Self Assessment of Governor Performance	<p>In order to evaluate the meeting and identify any changes necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the Committee, the Chair asked the following questions—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the agenda and papers clearly presented? • Was there time for sufficient debate and critical review of each item? • Do members consider that they were able to participate fully? <p>Governors provided an affirmative answer to each question.</p>	
14	Date of next meeting: 22 July 2009	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 22 July 2009.	

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed (Chair)
Christopher Spokes

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