

CORPORATION MEETING

**Wednesday 24 March 2010 at 5.15 pm at the SmartLIFE Conference Centre,
 Cambridge Regional College, Science Park Campus, Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge**

MINUTES

Present Christopher Spokes (Chair) Vernice Key
 Barry Popplewell (Vice Chair) Vicky Parrett
 Tony Cooper Paul Smith
 Rick Dearing Anne Ridgeon
 Anne Kent Jamie Easton

In attendance Chris Lang
 Chris Sherwin
 Steve Caley
 Andrea Chilton

Clerk Julia Kennedy

*The Chair welcomed Anne Ridgeon to her first meeting. Corporation **approved** the appointment of Jamie Easton as Student Governor and the Chair welcomed Jamie to the Board.*

Introduction			Action
1	Declaration of Interest	There were none.	
2	Apologies for absence	Apologies were received from David Adamson, Reza Assadi, Andrew Herbert, Alex Plant, Jill Preston, and Daniel Rigby.	

3	Minutes of the Corporation Away Day held on 15 January 2010	The Minutes of the Corporation Away Day were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.	
4	Matters arising from the Minutes	There were no matters arising that were not elsewhere on the agenda.	
Section 1: Strategic Matters			Action
5	COR/19/09-10 Principal's Report	<p><i>A revised version of the progress report against key objectives in the 2009/10 Strategic Plan was distributed.</i></p> <p>The Principal's Report provided an update on progress to date, funding prospects for 2010/11, and recommended that the College becomes a Trust Partner of the Manor Community College Trust. The report included a summary of the relevant electoral promises and noted that all major parties focussed on providing a learning route to avoid a "lost generation". Indicative allocations for the major funding streams reflected an excellent relationship with the Local Authority. The allocations included consolidation of student numbers that had been recruited without funding, and would allow for growth including training provided from Cherry Hinton Hall and in work-based learning [WBL].</p> <p>In relation to 14–16s education other than at school (EOTAS), an education and training programme had been introduced on behalf of the Cambridge Area Partnership schools. The information came through very late from the Pupil Referral Unit; CRC staff have done very well in providing the alternative curriculum and, as a result, numbers are expected to increase substantially next year. An increasing number of 14 to 16 year olds are being enrolled and provided with opportunities for progression.</p> <p>Governors' questions and discussion included—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How the College compared to others: CRC was among the best in the sector for estate and accommodation and was on the national benchmark for success rates with some results better – timely success on Apprenticeships and success on Train to Gain were already in the top decile nationally. ○ Post 16 Diplomas: Rick explained that there were problems with the assessment of the Diploma in Arts and Media by the examining/validating body and students have been transferred to the BTEC National qualification. ○ Communication strategy with local employers: Anne Ridgeon asked about liaison with local employers and Steve Caley explained that a very powerful model had been developed to meet their needs. Success rates for Apprenticeships and Train to Gain were excellent but the College was being squeezed on funding with enormous targets for learner starts in the next 4 months. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employer questionnaires: Andrea Chilton explained that results were extremely good with about 91% employer satisfaction. CRC had achieved, with conditions, the Training Quality Standard, which was based on random sampling by an independent organisation. ○ Staff understood that the recession meant that funding was tight, but recognised the College is well positioned for the future. ○ Adult Learner Responsive [ALR]: CRC is doing better than many and has moved most of provision into priority areas; the reduction in funding would be mitigated by moving some work into full cost activity. <p>The invitation to be a Trust Partner of the Manor Community College had been looked at in some detail by the L&A Committee. The Memorandum of Understanding set out CRC's proposed contribution. The Committee were disappointed by the lack of a commercial partner or one from the Science Park but recognised this was a unique opportunity to help to raise the aspiration of young people in the local community and recommended joining. Although there was a cost in time involved, CRC already had staff working in those areas.</p> <p>Governors asked about the benefit to CRC and whether there was a risk of "spreading too thinly", whether it added value or added risk. The value was in providing aspirational goals and progression opportunities for Manor School students. Governors discussed whether joining should be subject to the Trust acquiring a business and/or "aspirational partner" and whether CRC could assist in finding that partner.</p> <p>Corporation received the Principal's Report, noted progress against the objectives of the Strategic Plan and indicative funding allocation 2010/11, and approved CRC becoming a Trust Partner of the Manor Community College Trust. Corporation noted that the Community College Trust would also seek a commercial and/or Science Park Partner.</p> <p>Corporation requested further information about recruiting and engaging with employers, and this will be included on the agenda for the autumn strategic meeting.</p> <p>Corporation also requested a regular report on initiatives approved by Corporation, for example fund raising, and noted that it would be incorporated in the Principal's report on an annual basis.</p>	RD SC/JK RD
Matters Referred from Committees			
Section 2: Learning & Achievement Committee			Action
6.1	Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 March 2010	Corporation received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning and Achievement Committee held on 11 March 2010.	

<p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p>COR/20/09-10 Report from the Learning & Achievement Committee <i>and</i> COR/21/09-10 Recommendations from the Learning and Achievement Committee</p>	<p>Anne Kent, who chaired the March meeting, reported on behalf the Committee. The report from the Director of Learning and Achievement was a new agenda item and covered the restructure within the directorate, the Learner Progress Review progress, interim outcomes of the 09/10 graded lesson observation process, and the issues with the 08/09 success rates.</p> <p>The success rate data submitted to the LSC was not entirely accurate and the actual success rates were higher. The issue was being managed but the inaccurate data would be reflected in trend information for 3 years – and not properly reflect the improving trend at all levels. Success rates have risen again with long course F.E. success rates now at 80% (national average), apprenticeship timely success at 74% and Train to Gain 93% (both top decile).</p> <p>The Committee had recommended the Equality & Diversity Annual Report for approval. A named E&D Governor was required, and Alex Plant had subsequently volunteered for the role. Anne also highlighted the Good News Report, and Governors asked about the ways in which the good news is promoted. The report on destinations was also positive.</p> <p>Progression to employment was getting harder and the College was doing all they could to maintain positive progression and considering expanding part-time HE courses and apprenticeships. The recommendations of the Committee included item 5 of their agenda: the Performance Report, which provided monitoring information on attendance rates, success rates, and other key performance indicators linked to the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Corporation received the report and the recommendations from the Learning and Achievement Committee, approved the Equality and Diversity Annual Report and Alex Plant as named E&D Governor, and noted—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress outlined in the College Performance Report • overall levels of withdrawal from full-time courses were satisfactory and declining and there were high levels of positive destinations for full-time learners completing courses • letters of congratulations would be provided on behalf of Governors to three of those featured in the Good News Stories. 	<p>AP/AC</p>
-----------------------	--	---	--------------

Section 3: Finance and Resources Committee			Action
7.1	Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 March 2010	Corporation received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on 15 March 2010	
7.2	Management Accounts 2009/10: Period 7, for the Month of February 2010	At Period 7, Income and expenditure showed £42,000 adverse against issued budgets, but with the £1.2 million contingency withheld against this. Achieving the Train to Gain budget for the current year was sensitive to the requirement for high levels of starts in April and May and this risk may impact on the forecast £600,000 surplus. The allocations for 2010/11 was an excellent result overall, and Chris Lang was intending to budget for a larger surplus and contingency next year of £2 million in recognition of the need to build up a reserve and recognise market and funding volatility. Allowing for planned replacement of the equipment in the new buildings was expected to be an increasing requirement for future budgets. Corporation received and noted the Management Accounts for February 2010.	
7.3	COR/22/09-10 Matters for decision referred from the Finance & Resources Committee:	Corporation approved the policy framework for the 2010/11 budget and the timetable, noted the LSC funding methodology and allocations 2010/11, and approved the amendments to College Financial Regulations [mainly around depreciation to bring it into line with the investment policy].	CL
	i) Policy Framework for 2010/11 Budget including Timetable	In relation to the Student Union Accounts, Anne Ridgeon asked about the union and whether there were sufficient facilities for students. Corporation requested that Daniel Rigby, Student Governor and Chair of the Students Union, provides information about the Students Union for the next meeting of the Corporation.	DR/AC
	ii) LSC Funding Methodology and Allocations for 2010/11	Corporation received the Sports and Social Club and Student Union Accounts.	
	iii) Amendments to College Financial Regulations	Information on College subsidiary companies was referred from the Committee for the information of the Corporation. Subsidiary companies had been set up for risk management reasons: Wisteria Travel Limited, Morph Recording Limited, and Cambridge College Limited [CCL] – a subsidiary company to cover risk involved in overseas business. Governors asked about—	
	iv) Sports & Social Club and Student Union Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making CCL “live” instead of dormant • governance arrangements • links with the risk register • Paul said much the same with ARU. 	
7.4	COR/23/09-10 Matters for Information: College Subsidiary Companies	Corporation received the paper on College Subsidiary Companies and noted the incorporation of two new college subsidiary companies as previously approved, and noted governance arrangements would be reviewed and reported to Corporation.	CL/BP/JK

Section 4: Audit Committee			Action
8.1	Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 March 2010	Corporation received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 10 March 2010	
8.2	<p>COR/24/09-10 Matters for decision deferred from the Audit Committee:</p> <p>i) Appointment of Internal Audit Services</p>	<p>Vernice Key, Chair of the Audit Committee, reported on the meeting. The Committee had considered the Annual Review of Risk Management 2008/09, the Funding Assurance Report 2008/09, and Internal Audit reports in Budgetary Controls and Partnerships with Schools. “Moderate assurance” was provided for both reviews with a few moderate and low level risks identified.</p> <p>The Committee considered its terms of reference but recommend only a minor updating change at this time. A fuller review would be undertaken when the revised Audit Code of Practice [which includes model terms of reference] was available.</p> <p>Tender for auditors: the Committee recommended a change of internal auditor to Scrutton Bland who were preferred on the basis of their knowledge of the FE environments and the risks and value for money.</p> <p>Corporation approved—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference of the Audit Committee with the amendment incorporated • Award of contract to Scrutton Bland for the provision of internal audit services of five years from 2010/11 to 2014/15 subject to the successful completion of due diligence. 	<p>JK</p> <p>CL</p>
Section 5: Corporation Business			Action
9	<p>COR/25/09-10 Follow-up from January Away Day</p>	<p>The paper was provided in response to questions on governance raised at the Away Day on 15 January 2010. Corporation requested the Clerk to provide—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an overview of the statutory requirements of the Corporation • the required duties of the Corporation and its Committees • the difference between the Corporation and the College/institution. <p>The paper set out the general legal framework in which education colleges operate, and provided appendices taken from the Instrument and Articles of Government that relate specifically to the questions posed. A one page summary was provided.</p> <p>Corporation received the paper following up questions on governance from the Away Day and noted the value of having this information collated in one paper.</p>	

10	The Review of Governance and Strategic Leadership in English Further Education	<p>Julia Kennedy introduced this item: although the timing of the review had been criticised this was a valuable opportunity to influence the governance arrangements. A key recommendation was the simplification of the Instrument and Articles and development of a new Code of Governance.</p> <p>Governors' comments and discussion included—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remuneration for Governors and the value of empowering Corporations to make payments to Student Governors or other Governors who might be in need • inclusion of the members of the Senior Management Team on the governing board • value of empowering Corporations to respond to local conditions as they see fit • whether it was appropriate to provide feedback on behalf of the Corporation or whether individual Governors should respond. <p>Corporation <u>noted</u> the Review of Governance and Strategic Leadership in English Further Education and that feedback and comment was sought from college corporations and individual Governors, Clerks, and Principals, and <u>approved</u> the draft response from the Corporation with amendments to reflect the discussion at the meeting.</p>	JK
11	Self Assessment of Governor Performance	<p>The assessment of the meeting was considered against the following questions—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the agenda and papers clearly written? • Was there time for sufficient debate and critical review of each item? • Do members consider they were able to fully contribute? <p>Governors confirmed that the agenda and papers were clearly written, there had been time for sufficient debate with Members able to fully contribute.</p>	
12	Date of Next Meeting	<p>The date of the next meeting was discussed and it was agreed that the Clerk would consult on Governors' availability for 21July 2010.</p>	JK

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

Signed (Chair)

Christopher Spokes

Date.....