

CORPORATION MEETING

Wednesday 30 March 2010 at 6.15 pm in the Boardroom [Room B110], Science Park Campus, Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge

MINUTES

Present

Christopher Spokes, Chair	Andrew Herbert
David Adamson	Anne Kent
Reza Assadi	Vernice Key
Anne Constantine, Principal	Vicky Parrett
Tony Cooper	Barry Popplewell, Vice Chair
Jamie Easton	Jill Preston
Nichola Harrison	Anne Ridgeon
James Allen	

In attendance

Steve Caley
 Chris Lang
 Jackie Cannell [item 1 only]

Clerk

Julia Kennedy

The meeting followed a special meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee and the start was delayed to allow for a break between meetings.

Section 1: Preliminary			Action
1.1	Declaration of Interest	Christopher Spokes declared his interest as a Partner of Bidwells who act as CDM for the College, David Adamson and Nichola Harrison identified their interest as Members of the Hive Board, and Nichola declared her interest as a City Councillor and County Councillor in all matters in which the councils have an interest.	
1.2	Apologies for absence	Apologies were received from Alex Plant and Chris Sherwin.	

1.3	Minutes and Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 2 December 2010 • Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 2 March 2011 • Notes of the Corporation Away Day held on 21 January 2011. <p>The Minutes from the two meetings and the Notes of the Corporation Away Day were approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.</p>	
1.4	Matters Arising	There were no matters arising from the Minutes and Notes that were not elsewhere on the agenda.	
Section 2: Strategic Matters			Action
2.1	COR/18/10-11 Principal's Report	<p>Anne Constantine provided an update on her visit to China to launch a new university foundation programme in partnership with 3 other colleges. It had been a very useful 4-day trip and the income projection was in the region of £0.5million. Anne added that the March Open Day had been excellent with many positive comments received.</p> <p>The Principal's report covered—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MPs Visits: all three local MPs have visited the College since the last meeting of the Corporation. 2. University Technical College: both Cambridge University and Addenbrooke's were interested in an initiative focussed on health care, science, and laboratory technicians, and a meeting with employers was planned to assess the fit with local needs. Anne confirmed that CRC's role would include sponsoring and setting up the Trust. 3. Partnership with Manor School: the School was likely to apply for Academy Status, providing an opportunity for CRC to act as sponsor. Benefits for CRC included bolstering 14 –19 work, joint curriculum efficiencies, the opportunity for 14–19 curriculum planning for progression at 16, cost-effective sharing of support services, and an extension of influence within the education sector in Cambridge. Governors comments included— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether it would be a change in strategic direction for CRC • the benefit of a strategic discussion about who CRC links with and why, and managing the relationship with schools • the risk of CRC influencing the decision of the Manor School Governors and whether Governor involvement in discussions would signal an inappropriate level of CRC support • whether there was any income potential. <p>Anne explained that there was a special relationship with Manor School based on geographical location and the significant number of students who come to CRC from the school.</p>	

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Wolf Report: Anne identified the key recommendations and the main criticisms of the report. The impact on colleges was not yet clear but, if the Government accepted the recommendations, it would open up opportunities for CRC. 5. College Restructuring: the process for cost savings and job reductions was well underway and staff and unions had cooperated with over 60 requests for voluntary redundancy, of which two thirds could be met. Governors noted that there may be appeals at the end of the process that will need to be heard by a Committee of the Corporation. 6. UCU Industrial Action took place on 24 March 2011 following a national ballot. Twenty CRC staff took part. The press incorrectly linked it with the job reduction programme and correction/clarification would be published in the Cambridge News. 7. Area costs letter: Hills Road Sixth Form College was seeking counter signatories to a letter addressed to the YPLA and SFA seeking a level of uplift consistent with Essex and Hertfordshire. 8. VGSM [Vision, Goals, Strategies, Measures]. Anne noted there had been some feedback from Governors and provided an opportunity for further comment. The vision had been modified, on Governors' advice to "CRC to be recognised as a regional centre of excellence for economic growth and skills in the UK". Governors discussed use of the word "regional", whether the 6 Goals needed to be refocused on what would be delivered rather than the means of getting there and the impact on learners, and the value of Goal 4 [Be recognised as an excellent employer], and whether it should be a strategy rather than a goal. 9. Demographic forecast: this was provided in response to Governors' request at the Away Day for more demographic information and in order to assess whether the decline in 16–18s enrolment was part of a trend. <p>Corporation received Anne Constantine's report, approved the VGSM [subject to minor amendment] as a framework for strategic planning, approved Principal to Principal discussions in relation to academy status for Manor School and noted that a report back would be provided to Corporation in July on the UTC discussions and discussions regarding academy status for Manor School.</p>	AC
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2.2	COR/19/10-11 College Self Assessment Report 2009/10	<p><i>The Executive Summary of the SAR was provided as a separate document for Governors to retain as reference.</i></p> <p>Anne explained that in future the SAR would be provided to the Learning & Achievement Committee for review and clarified that the report related to the 2009/10 year. In answer to Governors' questions, Anne explained the value of the process and the role of the development plan.</p> <p>Corporation received and noted the College Self Assessment Report.</p>	
2.3	COR/20/10-11 Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2009/10	<p>There is a legal requirement to report annually to the Corporation on equality and diversity. The report charts the College's work over the past year and provides information about work to ensure the College is accessible, provides an environment of tolerance and inclusion, and is a fair and equal employer. This report covered implementation of the Equality Act 2010, and included information on embedding E&D in the curriculum.</p> <p>Corporation received the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2009/10 and noted that CRC had been accredited to gold standard against an external equality and diversity kite mark.</p>	
Matters Referred from Committees Section 3: Finance and Resources Committee			Action
3.1	Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 March 2011 and verbal report from the meeting held on 30 March 2011	<p>Barry Popplewell, Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee, introduced committee business, and noted the budget intended to provide a combined surplus and contingency for 2011/12 of £1.5m.</p> <p>Corporation received the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2011 and noted that Minutes from the meeting held on 30 March 2011 would be brought to the next meeting of the Corporation.</p>	Clerk
3.2	Management Accounts 2010/11 Period 7, for the month of February 2011	<p>Chris Lang explained that the College was on track to exceed the budgeted surplus, with a year to date surplus of £1.4m. Also rated green were 16-18 WBL, cash at bank [includes the VAT refund], and net current assets forecast at just over £3m. Governors noted the exceptional costs from the restructuring programme were not yet taken account of and were likely to be around £800,000.</p> <p>Corporation received and noted the Management Accounts 2010/11 period 7, February 2011.</p>	

3.3	<p>Matters for decision referred from the Committee</p> <p>COR/21/10-11 Policy Framework for the 2011/12 Budget, including Timetable and College Fees Strategy and Income Targets</p> <p>COR/22/10-11 Amendments to College Financial Regulations</p>	<p>The report on the Budget 2011/12 had been considered at the Finance and Resources Committee meeting that evening. Chris Lang provided an update and explained where savings were planned, in terms of pay and non-pay. A relatively large contingency of £1.2m had been included. More work was needed to produce a “bottom-up” budget that met all targets.</p> <p>There had been an extensive discussion on capital at the Committee meeting that reflected the desire to support current performance and to enable growth and development. The Committee had sought more information about projects, the decision-making process, and the pay-back period. Governors asked about the process for reviewing the budget, which would be considered by the Finance and Resources Committee before being recommended to the Corporation in July and noted that an additional meeting of the Committee may be needed. In relation to the Fees Strategy for 2012/13, which was being influenced by public policy, the Committee’s recommendation would also be made to the Corporation in July.</p> <p>Proposed amendments to College Financial Regulations updated the treasury policy to reflect the authorisation required when investing college funds, and revised the staff purchase scheme policy to include a new price category for technology-based products. Governors asked about the use of the scheme and whether advice had yet been received from HMRC.</p> <p>Corporation approved the Amendments to the College Financial Regulations, approved the Policy Framework for the 2011/12 Budget, and noted that the Budget would be considered as a major agenda item at the July meeting of the Corporation.</p> <p><i>Anne Ridgeon left during this agenda item at 7.00 pm, Barry Popplewell left at 7.10 pm, and David Adamson left at 7.25 pm.</i></p>	
Section 4: Learning and Achievement Committee			
4.1	<p>Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 March 2011</p>	<p>Corporation received the Minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Achievement Committee held on 2 March 2011.</p>	

<p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p>	<p>COR/23/10-11 Report from the Learning and Achievement Committee including HE Strategy and Recommendations from the Learning and Achievement Committee</p>	<p>Tony Cooper, Chair of the Committee said that the report highlighted the potential impact of the reductions in YPLA funding and covered the Annual Equality and Diversity Report, the Spring Term Update showing the three-year trend, Annual Report on Withdrawals and Destinations, Higher Education Strategy, Progress in Implementing the Teaching and Learning Strategy, Risk Register Review, and Good News Items.</p> <p>The Committee were concerned to ensure that CRC provides students with what they want and need. The Committee valued feedback provided by the Student Governor, Jamie Easton, and were pleased that Academy Boards were generally positive about teaching and learning. The role of the Committee included monitoring under-performance and improvements made. Governors noted the data management review, and that some issues related to data management rather than student achievement.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the draft HE Strategy at length. There was an opportunity for colleges to introduce some lower cost routes to HE and Governors noted that the fee differential with universities and flexibility in provision was key.</p> <p>Corporation received the Report and Recommendations from the Learning and Achievement Committee.</p> <p>Corporation approved the recommendations as set out in the paper in relation to the College Performance Report and the Annual Report on Destinations and Reasons for Withdrawal for Full-time Learners, approved the revised Higher Education Strategy, and noted the progress in implementing the Teaching and Learning Strategy, and the Good News stories.</p>	<p>CS</p>
<p>4.4</p>	<p>COR/25/10-11 Risk Appetite Statement</p>	<p>At the Away Day the Risk Appetite Statement had been referred for consideration by the Finance and Resources Committee and by the Learning and Achievement Committee.</p> <p>The discussion at the Learning and Achievement Committee had focussed on the need to identify that CRC was most risk averse in relation to students and their success, and to provide a clear link between strategy and the management and mitigation of risk.</p> <p>Corporation received the risk appetite statement provided by the Learning and Achievement Committee as set out in the paper, and noted that the statement did not incorporate any proposals from the Finance and Resources Committee. Corporation also noted the benefit of showing the statement in grid form.</p>	<p>AC</p>

Section 5 Audit Committee		
5.1	Minutes from the meeting held on 16 March 2011 including College Risk Register	<p>The Clerk provided corrections to the title of the Minutes and to the declaration of interests. Vernice Key, Chair of the Committee, noted that at the Committee's request for a fuller record of Governors' discussion was reflected in the Minutes.</p> <p>The meeting had reviewed four internal audit reports: Data Security, Human Resources, Financial Controls, and International Students. Governors asked about students from Libya and noted that they were mostly from oil or gas-based companies. Those due to return this week to Egypt or Tunisia were having difficulty and some had lost family members in the fighting. Governors discussed both the benefits and risks associated with international provision, and the steps taken to mitigate the risks.</p> <p>Good progress was reported on actions arising from Internal Audit Reports and the Committee had also reviewed the brief for the forthcoming audit on Corporate Governance and Risk Assurance, the results of the SFA's Subcontracting Review, and the College Risk Register.</p> <p>Corporation received and noted the Minutes from the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 16 March 2011 and approved the name change of the Committee to the Audit and Risk Committee.</p>
5.2	Matters for decision referred from the Committee: Re-appointment of Financial Statements and Regulatory Auditors for 2010/11	<p>The appointment of RSM Tenon as Financial Statements auditors was subject to annual confirmation. Tenon were the predominant accounting firm in the sector and the Committee were satisfied with their performance..</p> <p>The Committee had carefully considered the risk register. Governors asked about the use made of the register, and noted there was a risk management group of operational managers. In the context of risk the Committee recommended a change of name of the Audit Committee.</p> <p>Corporation approved the re-appointment of RSM Tenon as Financial Statements and Regulatory auditors, approved the Risk Register, and approved the change of name of the Committee to Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p><i>James Allen left at the end of this agenda item at 7.53 pm</i></p>

Signed (Chair)
Christopher Spokes

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