



**Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation of Birmingham Metropolitan College
of Further and Higher Education
held in the Boardroom at Matthew Boulton campus
on Thursday 24th March 2011 at 8.30 am**

Present:

Mr V Randeniya (Chair of Corporation and Governance and Search Committee) (Chair)	Mr R Mack (RM)
Ms J Williams (Deputy Chair of Corporation and Chair of Strategy, Finance and Business Development Committee) (Deputy Chair)	Mr A Madden (AM)
Mr J Allen (JA)	Ms C Mayne (CM)
Ms G Kaur Bains (GB)	Ms S Nixon (SN)
Mr S Brittan (SB)	Mr L Nolan (LN)
Mr A Burley (Chair of Riverside and Estates Committee) (AB)	Prof I Oakes (Chair of Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee) (IO)
Ms K Canty (KC)	Mr S Pearce (Chair of Audit Committee) (SP)
Ms S Davis (SD)	Mr C Stone (CS)
Ms V Docherty (VD)	Ms L Teboul (LT)
Mr G Evans (GE)	Dr C Braddock (Principal)
Ms M Hunt (MH)	

In attendance:

Mr C Hill (Executive Director Support Services) (CH)
Dr R Minett (Executive Director Quality Assurance) (RM)
Mr B Pattni (Executive Director of Finance) (BP)
Mr J Smith (Director – Systems & Policy Development) (JS)
Mrs C Bennett (Clerk to the Corporation)(Clerk)

Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Declarations of Interest

All staff (excluding the Clerk), staff and student members to leave for item 6.3. The Clerk to leave the meeting during Item 6.3 for the part of that item specific to the Clerk.

Item 1* – Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 16th December 2010

The public and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 16th December 2010 were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

Item 2 – Ofsted Inspection and PFA Audit February 2011 – Suggested Strategic Developments

- 2.1 The Principal and RM presented this item. RM referred to the Ofsted report that had recently been published. He added that the College is delighted with the outcome, but there are areas for improvement going forward. RM asked for specific questions.
- 2.2 SN asked about what was being proposed in terms of learner outcomes and an action plan going forward. RM responded by stating that the Quality Improvement Plan (discussed in detail at the recent Academic Standards & Quality Development meeting) is being developed further to take into account the suggested improvements from Ofsted.
- 2.3 The Principal commented that it is vital that the report is read in the context of other Colleges. She went on to say that again the improvements were discussed in detail at the Academic Standards and Quality Development meeting the day before and the emphasis now moves to learner outcomes and measuring those learner outcomes. She added that the College needs to be smarter and slicker in terms of measurement.
- 2.4 CS stated that he thought the discussions held by the Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee meeting would be a useful conversation for the whole Corporation to have and perhaps a breakfast briefing on this topic would be the best way forward. The Clerk said that she would arrange this as part of the next breakfast briefing programme.
- 2.5 LN asked what was the College doing to celebrate such a fantastic result? The Chair commented that this is in hand and it will come up in his report under item 6.3.
- 2.6 The Chair commented on the Corporation's responsibility in terms of improvements, that is, that the Corporation provide a strategic steer as opposed to day to day managerial support. The Chair added that the report does use some negative words but there is a whole range of excellence in the report and what is important is that the Corporation retains its desire and constant drive for excellence. The Chair asked what is in an outstanding report? The Principal responded it is what is in the College's report except that success rates have been 5% above national average for three years.
- 2.7 A detailed discussion then took place in relation to Ofsted and its measures of retention and success rates generally and the issues that the College has in relation to this. Further discussion took place in relation to lesson observations and moderation.
- 2.8 SN stated that she would also like it formally recorded that a huge 'well done' should go to the Executive and the rest of the staff of the College for such a good result. RM added that only 10% of colleges in the UK have been judged as 'Good' which really emphasises how well the College has done given that

there are over 300 colleges in the UK. RM stated that the College is likely to be in the top 5% of colleges and the Chair added that this is an excellent result.

Action:

- Clerk to arrange a breakfast briefing on the outcomes of Ofsted in the next breakfast briefing programme.

Item 3 – Update on Task and Finish Groups

- 3.1 This item was presented by JS. JS led the Corporation through a presentation which highlighted the outcomes of the strategic task and finish groups that were established at the Residential in Autumn 2010. In terms of the Governance task and finish group, JS reported on committee structures, policy review and evaluation cycles. He also outlined those committees that were now no longer needed.
- 3.2 JS also commented on the fact that the task and finish groups looked at mergers, partnerships, acquisitions and investment opportunities as well as academy developments.
- 3.3 JS referred to technology enabled learning and the College being at the forefront of developments in this area. Further, JS looked at blending and distance learning both nationally and internationally. JS presented on systems and processes harmonisation looking at a networked college as well as the strategic links that the College has with high value employers. Finally, JS looked at the College's fresh focus on quality going forward and that the strategic directions that have come out of the task and finish groups are to be embedded in a fresh Strategic Plan for 2010/2014.
- 3.4 The Chair asked for any questions. AM stated that it was his understanding that a Risk Management committee would not be necessarily needed but just to make sure that risk is a standing item on the Audit Committee agenda. This was agreed. AM added that a new cycle of business was considered to be extremely important in terms of timing and frequency of meeting.
- 3.5 IO reported that the key issues that his task and finish group looked at were mergers, partnerships, investments etc and how to take these forward regionally and nationally. IO added that technology was also very important and it was a key unique selling point.
- 3.6 JW fed into the Corporation the outcome of the task and finish group chaired by herself. She stated that there were five big themes and briefly referred to them – firstly, connected college (finding ways to draw in Governor expertise); field of employer engagement; academy and potential for schools; global context and whole territory of acquisition. JW went into these in a little more detail.

- 3.7 The Chair stated that it is obvious from the work of the task and finish groups that the Corporation and the College is really gearing up and is hungry for the opportunities that are out there and it is for that reason that if Ofsted had come at a later time perhaps the outcome would have been more accurate than what was given, which does not represent the reality of the situation.
- 3.8 SD asked about the positioning of the Ofsted report and the Principal responded that it was positioned carefully in press releases to ensure that the College maximised the success of the report.
- 3.9 A detailed discussion then took place in relation to some of the wording used in the Ofsted report and management provided a detailed explanation as to how Ofsted use only very strict language.
- 3.10 The Principal informed the Corporation that she proposes that a Residential takes place in May/June 2011 where all of the points that have come out of the Ofsted report can be picked up and the outcome of the task and finish groups can be moved forward.
- 3.11 CM asked management, that in terms of success rates, how is the College going about looking at this. CM used an example of when she was a science student at the College. She commented on these practicals being very useful as students understand much more which obviously improves success rates. RM stated that it sounded like a very good idea and said he would report it back to the Student Focus groups.
- 3.12 In terms of the May/June residential, the Clerk said she would circulate a date ASAP.
- 3.13 The Principal concluded by saying that it is the role of the Corporation to set the strategic direction of the College and the Residential will be a good place for discussion and debate.

Action:

- Clerk to circulate date of Residential for May/June 2011.
- RM to feed back CM's comments to student focus groups in terms of practicals

Item 4- Confidential Item

Item 5* - Management Accounts to 28 February 2011

- 5.1 BP presented this item and led the Corporation through the main points relating to the accounts. The Corporation approved the accounts to 28 February 2011.

Item 6 – Reports from Sub-Committees

6.1.1 Draft minutes of the Strategy, Finance & Business Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 17th February 2011

6.1.2 JW presented this item as Chair of the Committee. She reported to the Corporation that the Strategy, Finance & Business Development Committee received a de-brief on inspection and learning points and actions going forward. Further, the Committee were presented with a report on EMA cessation and the potential impact on BMET as well as what the College may look to do in terms of mitigation. JW reported that the Committee were provided with an update and presentation on Caterpillar. Further, the Committee were provided with a paper that set out the main findings on the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. The Committee also looked at the impact of funding reductions on the College for 16-18 and 19+ learners and the Committee received presentation in relation to the current funding position for the College. The Committee also approved Management Accounts up to 31 January 2011.

6.1.3 Any Other Business of the Strategy, Finance and Business Development Committee Meeting - 17th February 2011 – Confidential Item

6.2 Draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on Tuesday 8th March 2011

6.2 This item was presented by SP. SP stated that the Audit Committee meeting that had taken place in early March had been very useful and positive. The Committee looked at the Risk Register and the work that was being carried out in terms of development. The Committee approved the PFA FMCE Return for 2009/10. The College's internal auditors presented papers on efficiency and effectiveness, estates facilities management, risk management and the strategic planning framework, corporate governance and provided a follow-up of key audit recommendations. SP stated that really helpful discussions took place in relation to these, which were on the whole, extremely positive. SP informed the Corporation that the Committee were informed of a letter that had been received by the College's external auditors in relation to a specific area of the College but they was nothing of relevance at this stage to raise and management were looking into it.

Action: SP to discuss amendments to draft minutes with the Clerk.

6.3 Draft minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on Monday 21st March 2011

6.3 The Chair said he would come back to this item at the end of the meeting.

6.4 Draft minutes of the Academic Standards & Quality Development Committee held on Wednesday 23rd March 2011

6.4.1 IO presented this item. Before reporting to the Corporation on the Committee meeting IO stated to the Corporation that LN had made a really good point in terms of the Ofsted inspection. The outcome was really good for the College and everyone should be overjoyed with such a fantastic result and should not feel disappointed by the learning points and actions that came out of the inspection as it is the College's aspiration to aim for excellence. Other Corporation members agreed with this.

6.4.2 IO reported to the Corporation on what was reported to the Academic Standards & Quality Development Committee at the meeting the day before. IO said that the Committee received information on the Ofsted report, a paper on quality improvement measures, an update on IQER and the development engagement action plan, an update on IQER self evaluation report and preparation for summative review and an update on the Harborne Academy.

6.4.3 VD stated that she had to leave the Committee meeting for the update on Harborne Academy and she had left a question for the Committee and that was 'What was the responsibility of the Corporation for Harborne Academy?' RM responded that he was Chair of the Full Governing Body of the Academy. It has a Full Governing Body which is partly made up of individuals from the College but also some external individuals. There is also a Trustee Board established which is made up of the Principal and Bob Pattni, and the Academy is part of the wider remit group. VD thanked RM for the explanation.

6.5 Clerk's Report in relation to Governance and Search Issues

The Clerk stated that although a Governance and Search Committee meeting had not taken place since the last Corporation meeting, she informed the Corporation that over the next couple of months, terms of office of all members would be reviewed as well as committee structures and she would be contacting Corporation members shortly.

7 Any Other Business

RM tabled a paper in relation to HE fees and led the Corporation through the main aspects of that paper. RM informed the Corporation that Corporation approval was needed for the proposal in terms of HE fees at this Corporation meeting, to meet a required deadline set by the funding bodies. A detailed discussion took place amongst the Corporation and the recommendation was approved.

Approved:

Full Time fees for higher education courses to £6,000 per annum for academic year 2012/2013.

The Principal reported to the Corporation that the Parliamentary Secretary for Business was visiting the College this afternoon.

In relation to the Caterpillar launch the Principal informed the Corporation that Vince Cable MP has asked if it can be the 6th April which is a day different to what has already been given. Corporation members said that they were still unclear on the date and the Principal confirmed that the date would be sent to Corporation members within the next day or so. The Principal added that Corporation members were also being invited to the Caterpillar launch dinner.

The Principal reported to the Corporation that the College had been awarded the CBI Business and Schools project which was excellent news.

The Principal stated that in terms of the Samsung launch it looked like some of the students would be able to take part in the Torch ceremony at the Olympics which was excellent news.

The Principal reported that both herself, the Chair and the Clerk were speaking at the LSIS Annual Governance Conference taking place the next day (Friday 25th March). She concluded that excellent things are happening.

The Chair asked all staff (except the Clerk) staff and student members to leave the meeting so that a confidential item could be discussed.

See separate confidential minute.

Action:

- Clerk to circulate date and details of caterpillar launch

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date.....