



Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of the Corporation

held in the Conference Room of the College on 17th May 2007 at 5.30pm.

Present:

Mr T Edwards (Chairman)
Mr A Croney, Dr K Chester, Mr I Stephenson, Mr M Eggleston, Mr D Waugh.

Apologies:

Mrs D Logan-McCance, Councillor J Davies, Mr K Huggins Cooper, Mr G Marshall.

Absent:

Ms A Stewart, Mrs R Seabury.

In attendance:

Mr R Oliver, (Vice Principal, Finance and Resources), Mr D Allsop, (Acting Clerk to the Corporation).

1. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board

1.1 The Acting Clerk informed the Board that he had received nominations from Mr T Edwards and Dr K Chester, who had confirmed their willingness to continue as Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively. The Acting Clerk enquired if there were any further nominations and none were made.

Agreed:

1.2 THAT the Board elects Mr T Edwards and Dr K Chester to serve as Chairman and Vice Chairman for a further period not exceeding two years.

Mr T Edwards assumed the Chair and thanked the Board for electing him and Dr K Chester also showed his appreciation.

2. Attendance

2.1 It was noted that two Board members had again failed to attend or to send apologies.

Agreed:

2.2 THAT, the Acting Clerk will contact the members concerned and remind them of their responsibilities.

3. Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Corporation held on Tuesday 27th March 2007

Matters arising:

3.1. The Vice Principal, Finance and Resources, clarified the meaning of paragraph 4.7 of the Audit Committee minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2007. He stated that the item related to the cash banking procedure where there was a difference of view between the auditor and management over the significance of an identified issue. The issue related only to a small amount and management did not accept that the auditor's recommended action was necessary.

3.2 The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed as such by the Chairman.

Agreed:

3.3 THAT the Board approve the minutes.

4. Chairman's verbal report

4.1 The Chairman reported that no significant issues had arisen since the last meeting of the Board. Various discussions had been held with the Acting Principal and the Acting Clerk relating to items which are reflected elsewhere on the agenda. The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Acting Principal and the Acting Clerk for their support in a continuing period during which his capacity to deal with College matters is limited due to his other commitments.

Agreed:

4.2 THAT the Board receive the Chairman's report.

5. Principal's report

5.1 The Acting Principal presented his report and made reference to:

- Activity based income streams;
- An update on the future of secondary education in Derwentside;
- College Development plan update;
- Curriculum issues;
- Local Government review (LGR) – stakeholder consultation.

5.2 Board members asked a number of questions about the report and there was a lengthy debate about the merits and demerits of sending a formal response to the LGR consultation.

Agreed:

5.3 THAT the Board receive the Acting Principal's report. The Board accepted the Acting Principal's recommendation not to submit a response to the LGR consultation following a vote (four members in favour and two against).

6. Finance and Resources Reports

6.1 The Vice Principal, Finance and Resources, presented a number of reports:

- Sale of Uniformed Services Site;
- Finance report – period to 31 March 2007;
- Draft Business Continuity Plan;
- Gender Equality Scheme;
- Race Equality Policy.

6.2 The Vice Principal, Finance and Resources advised the Board that the party who had submitted the highest offer for the sale of the Uniformed Services site in Stanley had asked for a reduction in the price. The requested reduction related to the identification of a number of features of the site which in the Vice Principal's view were foreseeable at the offer stage. The Vice Principal agreed to clarify the ongoing cost of holding the site.

Agreed:

6.3 THAT the Board accept the Acting Principal's recommendation not to reduce the price below a specified figure.

6.4 The Finance report shows a surplus of £115,000 as at 31 March 2007 in comparison to the forecast position of a surplus of £116,000. The current cash position remains slightly below the forecast position. Whilst current financial performance is lower than expected, the College remains on target to deliver the forecasts by the year end.

6.5 The Vice Principal, Finance and Resources explained the rationale behind the proposed Draft Business Continuity Plan, the Gender Equality Scheme and the Race Equality Policy.

Agreed:

6.6 THAT the Vice Principal, Finance and Resources' reports be received and their contents noted. The Board approved the Draft Business Continuity Plan, the Gender Equality Scheme and the Race Equality Policy.

Dr K Chester left the meeting at 18.45

7. Board Self Assessment

7.1 The Acting Clerk reported that a meeting of the task group had taken place immediately before the Board meeting. A lot of ground had been covered but the group was not yet in a position to bring recommendations to the Board. The task group intended to meet again prior to the next Board meeting and will report progress at that time.

Agreed:

7.3 THAT the Board receive the Acting Clerk's report.

8. Seven day rule items

8.1 The Acting Clerk confirmed that there were no items circulated under the 7 day rule.

9. Next meeting Agenda

9.1 Items for the next meeting include:

- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Chairman's report
- Acting Principal's report, including:
 - Updated College Development Plan
- Vice Principal, Finance and Resources' report, including:
 - Detailed Budget position.
- Board self assessment process
- Acting Clerk's appraisal.

10. Any other business

10.1 There were no items of other business.

11. Date of next meeting

11.1 The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 19th June 2007 at 5.30pm in the alternative Conference Room.

11.2 The meeting closed at 19.01 pm.