

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION HELD ON
TUESDAY 3rd MARCH 2009**

Present:

Members: Derek Lyon (Chair), John Barker, Jen Billingham, John Calvert, Hazel Charlesworth, Grant Cronin, Lee Dacre, Gill de Bourcier, Peter Fitzpatrick, John Goddard, Dave Kelly (Principal), Liz Kershaw, Greg Peers, Mike Phipps and Eugene Tumelty

In attendance: Jan Fielding

Clerk: Ed Elvish.

Apologies:

1 Conflict of Interest

Members confirmed that they had no conflict of interest with the business of the meeting as detailed in the agenda.

2 Minutes

Documents received:

- Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16th December 2008
- The minutes of the meeting held on December 16th 2009 were accepted

3 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not already covered elsewhere on the agenda

4 Reports from Committees

4.1 Audit Committee

Mike Phipps presented the report of the Audit Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3rd February 2009. He expressed satisfaction with the self assessment within the recent FMCE process which rated the areas relating to audit processes and outcomes as good. Equally pleasing had been the latest Tenon's Internal Audit Assignment report which had rated all three areas covered as good and had only put forward two grade 3 recommendations. As far as governance issues, the Audit Committee acknowledged and accepted the need for governors' terms of office to be considered by the relevant committee and the need for specific approvals of recommendations to be recorded within full Corporation minutes

Documents received:

- Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2009
- FMCE Barrow Sixth Form College (December 2008)
- Governance Appendix BSFC January 2009
- Internal Audit Assignment Report October 2008

The Corporation accepted the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3rd February 2009 and approved the Committee's recommendation that Governors' Terms of Office should be a matter for further consideration

4.2 Employment Policy Committee

Hazel Charlesworth presented the report of the Employment Policy Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13th January 2009

Document received;

- Minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2009

The Corporation accepted the minutes of the Employment Policy Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13th January 2009

4.3 Quality Improvement and Standards Committee

Hazel Charlesworth presented the report of the Quality Improvement and Governance Committee held on Tuesday 20th January 2009

Documents received;

- Minutes of the Meeting of the Quality Improvement and Governance Committee held on 20th January 2009
- Cross College Annual Plan
- Humanities Annual Plan
- Maths and ICT Annual Plan
- Science Annual Plan
- The Arts Annual Plan

The Corporation accepted the minutes of the Quality Improvement and Standards Committee meeting held on Tuesday 20th January 2009

4.4 Search and Governance Committee

Derek Lyon presented the report of the Search and Governance Committee held on Tuesday 13th January 2009

Documents received;

- Minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2009
- FMCE Return to LSC Dec 2008 (*Extracts relating to governance were included as pages 1 to 8 in the FMCE report as part of the Audit Committee papers*)

The Corporation accepted the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13th January 2009

5 Academy Update

The Principal reported that, now that the latest phase of consultation was almost complete, the decision had been taken to go ahead with the 2 site option. Nationally the legal challenge to the process of appointing sponsors had found in favour of DCSF.

A principal has been appointed to the new academy who is currently on the payroll of Furness College until the academy becomes a legal entity as an employer. Work to establish a trust is progressing with the hope that this will be in place by early May.

Much work is being undertaken on curriculum and admissions, and a staffing structure is expected with appointments in May. The location of ex-Alfred Barrow staff is still to be decided. Consultation is underway with pupils about the name and logo of the academy. Funds are available for refurbishment in the summer. In addition to the national legal challenge, a local one is expected.

6 Buildings Project

The Principal updated the meeting on developments regarding the College's capital project. Priorities within the LSC's national programme were to be reviewed the following day. Outcomes were awaited and until then the contractors had been stood down. The Principal confirmed that all indications are still that the College is towards the front of the national queue of colleges awaiting support.

The LSC had asked the College to rework sets of figures indicating the effects of 3 month and 6 month delays and a revised period for repayment over 5 years. Should the worst case scenario of an LSC decision not to support arise then the College would lose £300,000 of that already committed, the rest covered by guaranteed LSC reimbursement

7 International Baccalaureate (IB)

This item was introduced by Jan Fielding, Vice Principal. She confirmed that the College has been designated as a Cumbria pilot for the IB and a co-ordinator appointed. The development has at its core a far broader curriculum that would take more hours and be equivalent to up to 6 AS subjects.

There are some concerns about the potential for recruitment to the IB as evidence from elsewhere suggests relatively low numbers, especially to start with. The original intention had been to launch the College's programme to coincide with the opening of the new building. As a consequence the delay in the capital building programme had meant that a decision has been taken to delay the introduction of the IB by one year.

Jan reported that the implementation costs may well prove to be the determining factor in whether the initiative finally goes ahead.

8 Ofsted January 2009

Although the final published report was awaited, the Principal took the opportunity to thank all those governors who had contributed during the inspection visit. There was agreement from all concerned that the process had been well managed by Jeff Chadd.

Governors were told that the draft report read extremely well and was, perhaps, even more satisfying than the grades. The emphasis on quality improvement had been much appreciated by inspectors.

The Principal reported that no post-inspection action plan was required as the College was in the high category which brought exemption from such follow up. The Chair thanked everybody for their contribution to what he felt was a glowing report.

9 Health and Safety Committee

Documents received;

- Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on Tuesday 4th November 2008

After some discussion the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting on 4th November 2008 were accepted

10 College News

Presented by Gill de Bourcier

A copy of Gill's report to the Corporation is attached at the end of these minutes

11 Strategic and Succession Planning

The Principal introduced this item by pointing out that the College would inevitably be a very different place in four years time and that he thought it appropriate to give governors the opportunity to anticipate some of the changes now and initiate further strategic planning now deal with them. In particular

1. There is need to set targets now if the College is to achieve in the next Ofsted inspection the outstanding grades so narrowly missed this time
2. The age profile of staff is such that a large number will leave in the next few years
3. Relationships with external bodies will change as sixth form colleges move from LSC to the Local Authority but still retain their incorporated status. This is particularly significant with Barrow being the only sixth form college in Cumbria.
4. Decisions will be needed about whether to align the College with SFCF or AOC or, as now, with both
5. Relationships with local schools will change as the number decreases
6. Relationships with the General FE Colleges and the University of Cumbria are evolving
7. The relationship with Furness College continues to evolve
8. Despite recent events the possibility of some schools seeking to establish new sixth forms cannot be discounted
9. The future of level 2 courses needs to be assessed
10. Funding for adults will come from elsewhere after the demise of the LSC and will be separate from 16 to 19 funding

It was agreed that the complexity of the issues was such that first consideration should be by the Search and Governance Committee who could judge at what point and with what background information this should be a matter for full Corporation consideration.

11 Confidentiality

No items were deemed to be confidential