

## CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors  
held on Monday 7 March 2011 at 5.00pm in the Community Room, Wellington Road**

### **PRESENT**

Mr D Swingwood (Vice Chair)	Ms M Hunt
Ms C Boughton	Mrs J Kitchen
Ms T Campbell	Mr R Landman
Mr J Crockett	Mr I Millard
Ms K Douglas	Mr G Peebles
Dr M Hardacre	Cllr J Rowley
Dr J Hunt	Mr N Spencer

Ms S Meddings (Clerk)

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr B Dhir  
Ms S Nicholson  
Ms E Payne  
Mr P Polowyj  
Ms S Prince  
Mr J Stretton

Mr D Swingwood, the Vice Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that he would be chairing the meeting in place of Dr Wylie who was unable to attend because of family illness.

The meeting was preceded by a Briefing on Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework, the Self-Assessment Report and the Grading structure presented by Ms Sara Nicholson, Vice Principal Quality, Standards and Services.

Before the Briefing took place, however, the Chair suggested that agenda items 5, 6 and 7 should be taken first and together to enable the newly appointed Governor to join the meeting for the Briefing and to deal with other membership issues at the beginning of the meeting.

### **01/11 COMMITTEE MINUTES – SEARCH & GOVERNANCE – 24 JANUARY 2011**

The Chair presented the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee held on 24 January 2011 and drew attention to the discussions recorded under Minute No 04/11 which dealt with the re-appointment of current members of the Board.

The Chair reported that since the Committee meeting, Ms Raj Babber had resigned from the Board for personal reasons. The Chair drew attention to the Committee's recommendation to the Board on the re-appointment of Dr M Hardacre and Mr R Landman.

### **Resolved:**

- i) That Mr Robin Landman be re-appointed to the Board of Governors for a further term of office effective from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2015.

- ii) That Dr Mike Hardacre be re-appointed to the Board of Governors for a further term of office effective from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2015.

*Mr R Landman and Dr M Hardacre joined the meeting.*

#### **02/11 VERBAL REPORT FROM THE MEETING OF THE SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 7 MARCH 2011**

The Chair reported that the Search and Governance Committee had met prior to the Board meeting to receive feedback on the interview held with a prospective Governor, Ms Tonia Campbell. Following the feedback, the Search and Governance Committee agreed to recommend Ms Campbell's appointment to the Board and as a member of the Standards Committee.

The Chair reported that Ms Campbell was a former student of the College where she studied for a B Tech in performing arts before moving on to study drama at University followed by post graduate studies. Ms Campbell was both a drama tutor and a professional actress who worked in London before returning to Wolverhampton, her home town. Ms Campbell has strong community links within Wolverhampton and was currently artistic director of a youth theatre group.

The Chair further reported that from 1 April 2011 there would be three vacancies on the Board of Governors for Independent members and one vacancy for a staff governor. The Search and Governance Committee had considered 6 applications arising from the current Governor Recruitment campaign and had agreed to invite all the applicants into College to meet with the Principal, the Clerk and an available member of the Committee.

#### **Resolved:**

That Ms Tonia Campbell be appointed to the Board of Governors as an Independent member for the period ending 31 March 2014 and as a member of the Standards Committee.

*Ms T Campbell joined the meeting. In welcoming Ms Campbell, the Chair invited Governors and Officers to introduce themselves.*

#### **03/11 BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEMBERSHIP**

In presenting this item, the Chair reported that both Dr John Hunt and Cllr John Rowley would not be seeking a further term of office after the end of this month.

At the October 2010 Board of Governors meeting a presentation was made to Dr Hunt to thank him for his long service as Vice Chair. The Chair proposed a vote of thanks to Dr Hunt for his even longer service as a College governor and his extremely positive and valued contribution.

The Chair then reported that Cllr Rowley had served two terms of office on the Board of Governors and had decided to stand down to concentrate on his work as a Wolverhampton Councillor. On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked Cllr Rowley for his support of the College and for his contribution to the work of the Board and to the Standards Committee.

Dr Hunt and Cllr Rowley were presented with gifts.

The Chair then handed over to Ms S Nicholson for the Briefing.

The Briefing “CIF, SAR & Grading” included:

- Structure chart of Ofsted Grading
- Curriculum SAR process
- Explanation of Ofsted gradings
- How grades for subject sector areas are decided
- Overview of the College’s Self Assessment (SAR) process

The Briefing was followed by questions and discussion.

*Cllr J Rowley left the meeting.*

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr WA Parker.

There were no declarations of interest.

### **04/11 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 13 DECEMBER 2010**

#### **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 December 2010 be approved as a correct record.

### **05/11 PRINCIPAL’S REPORT TO GOVERNORS – MARCH 2011**

The Principal presented his report to Governors for March 2011 which provided an overview of:

- Update on funding allocations and timescales for further funding clarification for 2011/12
- Policy update and emerging issues for the FE Sector and College
- Update on key quality actions
- Communication developments

In receiving the Principal’s report Governors noted the following key areas highlighted in the report:

#### **Latest update on funding allocations**

Adult 19+ funding: Over the next four years government funding for adult learning would be reduced by around 25%. Some of this funding was expected to be replaced by higher contributions from individuals and employers. The latest calculation was that the College’s adult funding would reduce from the current year’s £10.31m to £10.06m – a reduction of £255,000 (2.5%). Other adult budgets, yet to be confirmed, may see further cuts of around £300,000.

Youth (16-19) funding: Similarly to adult funding, the next four years sees significant reduction in funding but with an expectation that there is delivery to the same number of learners. The estimate was a slight increase in the learner numbers for 2011/12 but youth funding would be reduced from the current year’s £15.79m to around £15.39m – a reduction of £400,000.

It was reported however that Government priority relating to adult and youth apprenticeships provided an opportunity to grow this area of college activity.

Overview of other funding – European funding, HE funding, the funds linked to the Wolverhampton Learning Partnership including the Working Neighbourhood fund.

In summary the total impact was currently around £1m to £1.5m reduction but Governors were requested to treat the figures with caution as allocations would not be confirmed until the end of March 2011.

### **Policy update and merging issues for the FE sector and College**

The Wolf Report on vocational education. The four main principles for reform and a summary of the proposals

Other key policy areas which were awaiting clarification including HE policy implementation, FE fees policy, Learner support arrangements.

### **Update on Key quality actions**

An overview of the actions taken by senior management to address improvement in the quality of the College's provision. This included the Principal meeting with each of the Faculty leadership teams to go through improvement plans, latest data and to review their approach to monitoring and actions to improve quality.

### **Communications developments**

Of note was the development of the Principal's website and blog, developed in response to requests from staff for more direct information and communications. Governors endorsed this development.

**06/11**

### **ACADEMIES UPDATE**

In receiving a verbal update the Board noted the following:

The SWB Academy had had an interim Ofsted visit which had been positive. Ofsted were also positive in respect of the re-integration of the two communities.

£28m has been confirmed for the SWB Academy new build.

The NEW Academy was faring less favourably in respect of the reduction of monies for new build. A balance between new build and larger scale refurbishment was being explored. £4.5m had been guaranteed for the new Diploma Centre.

The Principal reported that a fuller evaluation and review of the Academies would be reported to the next Board meeting.

**07/11**

### **COMMITTEE MINUTES – STANDARDS - 31 JANUARY 2011**

Dr M Hardacre, Chair of the Standards Committee, presented the minutes of the Committee meeting and drew Governors' attention to the following:

The Committee had received a Briefing on the outcomes and findings from the Student Focus Group meetings;

Minute No 02/11 – The Committee had considered a report presenting an analysis of success rate data for 2009/10 together with proposed success rate targets for performance in 2010/11. The Committee agreed that they were satisfied that the proposed target success rates were sufficiently stretching and recommended approval of the proposed success rates to the Board of Governors.

Minute No 03/11 – The Committee had received a progress review on the work of the College's Teaching and Learning Service towards improving teaching, learning and the learner experience.

Minute No 04/11 – The Committee had considered the annual report on Learner Progression.

Minute No 05/11 – The Committee had given consideration to the College's revised Quality Strategy together with the Implementation Plan for 2010/11 which underpins the Quality Strategy. The committee endorsed the revised Quality Strategy and agreed to recommend approval to the Board of Governors.

#### **08/11 COMMITTEE MINUTES – RESOURCES – 7 FEBRUARY 2011**

In presenting the minutes, Mrs J Kitchen, Chair of the Resources Committee drew Governors' attention to the following decisions made by the Committee:

Minute 04/11 – The Committee had given detailed consideration and approval to the proposed Fees Framework for 2011/12 which would become effective on 1 August 2011.

Minute 05/11 – The Committee had determined the proposed travel and subsistence rates for staff and governors for the tax year 2011/12.

#### **09/11 SUCCESS RATE PERFORMANCE 2009/10 AND TARGETS FOR 2010/11**

Governors received a report providing an analysis of success rate data for 2009/10 together with proposed success rate targets for performance in 2010/11 for Board approval.

It was noted that the report had been considered in detail by the Standards Committee on 31 January 2011 and that the Committee recommended approval of the proposed success rate targets for 2010/11 to the Board.

Governors noted the following key issues from the Executive Summary:

- A 3% decline in success rates for 2009/10 has prompted revisions to the structure of the quality system and extra resources have been allocated to support monitoring and review frameworks;
- Close monitoring of underperforming areas was being undertaken at senior level and has informed the range of success rate targets proposed for 2010/11.

In response to a question about the timing of Governors' approval of success rates within the academic year, it was agreed to bring the proposed success

rate targets for 2011/12 to the November 2011 Standards Committee and December 2011 Board of Governors respectively.

**Resolved:**

That the following success rate improvement targets for 2010/11 be approved on the recommendation of the Standards Committee:

16-18 long qualifications	75-77%
19+ long qualifications	73-75%
16-18 short qualifications	77-78%
19+ short qualifications	85-87%
16-18 very short qualification	87-89%
19+ very short qualifications	94-95%

**10/11**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The Board considered a report on Strategic Planning which:

- Provided an update on ongoing strategy development within the College;
- Provided an outline programme for the Strategic Forum to be held on 28 March 2011;
- Provided a strategic update on developments with how Social Justice and Environmental Sustainability were being championed within the College.

The following were of note:

In respect of the Strategic Business Plan, it was reported that work has been undertaken on the development of Key Performance Indicators which has been discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board. A full progress report would be provided at the Strategic Forum.

It was reported that work was underway to reduce costs and improve performance commensurate with the Coalition Government's strategy to 2014/15. 2011/12 was seen as a "stepping stone" where crucial decisions would need to be made informed by what was known and the funding streams expected in 2014/15.

In respect of Sustainability, it was reported that the College has recently applied to enroll on the Carbon Trust FE Initiative which assists colleges quantify and reduce their carbon emissions. Furthermore, solar panels have been installed on the roof of the Wellington Road building to sell power to the national grid.

Discussion arose on the need to look at energy efficient technologies in a proactive way and the importance of being at the "front end" of new developments to put College students in a strong position.

**11/11**

**COLLEGE BUDGET 2010/11**

The Board received an update on how the College was performing against the approved budget 2010/11 which seeks to return an historical surplus of £707,000 excluding the impact of the costs of redundancy and FRS17 Pensions adjustment.

It was reported that the bulk of the report was considered at the Resources Committee on 7 February 2011 but that appendix 1 to the report identified the

latest estimate on variations anticipated for the full year against the original estimates approved in July 2010. It was noted that there remain pressures on achieving the 16-18 main contract, the 16-18 Apprentices contract and the fees budget for the full year. Given the lower than targeted actuals on 16-18, resources originally assumed for delivery in these areas have been redirected to areas that can compensate by delivering an increase over their original target in the remainder of the year.

The College continues to target a surplus of £707,000 although this would require adjustments in the last 6 months of operations through to July 2011.

It was reported that cash balances were tight in the months through to April but would recover by July 2011.

The Principal commented that the College was clearly moving towards a surplus in 2010/11 and that the difference between the College's cashflow this year and last year was significant in this.

It was further noted that the management of College debtors remained a high priority.

12/11

### **UPDATE ON BUDGET PREPARATIONS 2011/12 ONWARDS**

Governors received a report which:

- Provided an update on the indicative allocations for 2011/12 that apply for 80% of the College's income streams in 2010/11;
- Outlined the work underway in college to prepare for the range of possible outcomes from those allocations, the detail of which would not be confirmed until 31 March 2011;
- Advised of the communications which have been provided to staff and partners as the College seeks to provide clear leadership, despite the uncertainties faced
- Sought delegated authority to be given to the Principal to take forward actions that would mitigate the impact of the funding reductions that begin from August 2011.

It was reported that by mid March it was expected that the College would have drawn together a set of actions that would plan for not just 2011/12 but for following years as well.

In respect of timescales, should the College need to issue a S188/HR1 this would need to be issued 90 days before the effective date of any reductions being implemented and by early April at the latest. Given that the Resources Committee next met on 18 April and the Board next met in May, delegated authority was sought to allow work to be progressed in March/April.

### **Resolved:**

That delegated authority be given to the Principal to take forward actions that would mitigate the impact of the funding reductions that begin from August 2011.

13/11

### **LEARNER PROGRESSION**

Governors noted the contents of the annual report on Learner Progression presented to the Standards Committee on 31 January 2011.

14/11

**DRAFT QUALITY STRATEGY AND QUALITY REVIEW**

Governors received a copy of the report presented to the Standards Committee on 31 January 2011.

The Board agreed the proposal that regular updates on progress against the Action Plan should be reported to the Standards Committee.

In noting that the Standards Committee had given detailed consideration to the revised Quality Strategy and recommended its approval to the Board, Governors

**Resolved:**

That the revised Quality Strategy be approved.

15/11

**SENIOR POSTHOLDERS' DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES – REVISED**

In noting that the revised procedures were considered and endorsed by the Remuneration Committee on 14 February 2011, Governors

**Resolved:**

That the disciplinary and grievance procedures for the College's Senior Postholders be approved.