

**MINUTES of the meeting of the BOARD OF GOVERNORS held at
BICTON COLLEGE on Tuesday 1 April 2008**

Present:	Mr J A T Lee	- Chairman
	Dr F Harper	- Vice Chairman
	Sir John Cave	
	Ms J Bashford	
	Mrs C Bourne	
	Mr C Harvey	
	Cllr A Liverton	
	Mrs J Wymer	
	Mrs J Yung	
	Mrs L Twigg	- Interim Principal
	Mr J Wyman	- Student Governor
Ms C Hogan	- Student Governor	
In Attendance:	Mr G R Copper	- Clerk to the Board of Governors
	Mr T Pitcher	- FE Associates (Item 2)
Apologies:	Cllr J Berry	
	Mr J Lowe	

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

- Approved revised Terms of Reference for the Education and Standards Committee.
- Approved the residential fees for 2008-9.
- Approved revised Terms of Reference for the Finance and Policy Committee.
- Approved revised Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee.
- Approved that the Governor attendance target remain at 78% for 2008-9.
- Approved the Student Governor election procedure.
- Approved revised Terms of Reference for the Search Committee
- Approved proposals for the 2008 Review of Governance.
- Adopted the revised Instrument and Articles of Government effective from 1 January 2008.
- Agreed that publication of Board and Committee Minutes on the College website would take place once they were received and approved by the Board of Governors.
- Approved a new determination of Board membership.
- Approved revised Terms of Reference for the Board.
- Approved an updated Code of Conduct for the Board.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN

- 1.1** The Chairman updated Governors on recent events including the year of Farming

and Food event at Bicton which had been very successful.

- 1.2 The Interim Principal and Mr Pitcher gave a presentation on the initial outcomes of the Strategic Options Review. The Chairman stated that the Board had commissioned the Review and established the terms of reference, and that Governors would decide on the future strategy. Progress with the Review was satisfactory and following the terms of reference. A final report was expected to be completed within three weeks.
- 1.3 There was a discussion and Governors questioned some of the points raised in the presentation and emphasised their ownership of the review and control of the future strategy. The completed Review would be formally presented to governors for discussion.

2. MINUTES

- 2.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2007 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

2.2 Matters Arising

The Chairman reported that in accordance with the Articles of Government, the Secretary of State's permission had been obtained to appoint Louise Twigg as an Interim Principal. This was required in situations where the person appointed did not have a contract of employment with the College.

- 2.3 The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2008 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

2.4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

3. REPORT OF EDUCATION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

- 3.1 Dr Harper reported on the meeting held on 12 February 2008. The Committee had approved the Marketing Plan for 2008-9 and the new Weapons Policy. The Committee wished to receive regular reports on care standards and child protection and also required to see a copy of the contract for higher education work with the University of Plymouth. It was noted that a quality strategy was now required and that this was being prepared for Board approval. It was emphasised that work based learning and Train to Gain were key areas for development. The Rural Academy was continuing. A report on lesson observations showed a continuing shift from satisfactory to good but improvement needed to be sustained.
- 3.2 The revised terms of reference for the Committee were in a new format and linked to the cycle of business for the Academic Board and SMT. The terms of reference were approved.

4. REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

- 4.1** Mr Harvey reported on the meetings held on 11 February 2008 and 25 March 2008. The issue of University of Plymouth capital funding had now been clarified and was for a three year period payment. The financial position of the College had deteriorated and LSC approval for a bank loan of £350k had been sought. The LSC may advance this amount of funding instead of taking out the loan. The College had over achieved the learner numbers target by approximately 40. The LSC would not fund them in 2007-8 but would increase the funded learner numbers for 2008-9 and may assist with interim management costs. The Committee had approved an action plan to start to deal with the financial situation which included the termination of a senior management post.
- 4.2** A paper showing proposed residential charges, increased by 5% for 2008-9, was presented. The fees were approved. Tuition fees for 2008-9 would be considered at the next meeting.
- 4.3** Updated terms of reference for the Committee, reflecting the new membership model were approved.

5. ENROLMENTS AND FUNDING REPORT

- 5.1** The Interim Director of Finance and Planning reported that the College was above target for 16-18 FE learners at 522 compared with the target of 500. Adult learners would also exceed the target. The forecast for work based learning funding was being reduced by £50k as the College had not yet recruited the additional learners but this situation was expected to improve by £20-30k. The HE funding position was proving difficult to confirm due to the lack of transparency of the funding mechanism. The target was 84 students and 60 had been enrolled. A copy of the agreement with the University would be made available for Governors.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

- 6.1** The Interim Director of Finance and Planning presented an updated financial forecast and explained the history of the budget and revised forecasts. The sensitivities reported in February had proved to be realities and were now reflected in the forecast. Full cost course income was very significantly below the budget target. Increased costs were reported particularly in staff costs and overall a substantial deficit was now forecast for the year.
- 6.2** Governors questioned the reliability of the forecasts and were assured that the latest forecast was realistic and supported by the cash flow position. Work had started on a recovery plan and action was being taken to tighten controls on staff recruitment, minimise over delivery and costs of additional unfunded qualifications and reduce fee rebates. Efficiency of teaching was being looked at due to higher than average remission levels.

- 6.3** The details of the financial recovery plan were worked on and the situation of previous management failures would not be allowed to impact on the learners.

7. REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 7.1** Sir John Cave reported on the meeting held on 5 March 2008. The Committee had looked at actions outstanding from previous reports and requested realistic revised completion dates where some had slipped behind schedule. Internal audit reports on bank and treasury management and debtors and non grant income had been received. Three high risk points had been identified and actions agreed by management. The risk register had been updated improvements to the presentation and clarity of the register discussed.

- 7.2** The performance of the financial statements and internal auditors had been reviewed and was found to be satisfactory.

- 7.3** Updated terms of reference for the Committee were approved.

8. LSC DELIVERY PLAN

- 8.1** The Interim Principal reported that an indication of the baseline funding had just been received from the LSC for 2008-9. The allocation reflected the overachievement of 16-18 learner numbers in 2007-8. Funding was now based on standard learner numbers and indicative funding for 16-18 was £3.3 million equivalent to 728 SLNs. The specialist college uplift factor had now ceased. 19 plus, Work based learning and Train to Gain funding had yet to be confirmed

9. REPORT OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

- 9.1** Mrs Wymer reported on the meeting held on 6 March 2008. The Committee had noted that Mr Ellingham had been now been appointed to the Board. After considering the balance of skills and experience of Board members the Committee recommended the re-election of Cllr Berry and Ms Bashford to the Board. The Clerk would place the election on the agenda for the July meeting.

- 9.2** Although Governor attendance had fallen below target in 2006-7, it was recommended that the target remain at 78% and current attendance was above target. This was agreed,

- 9.3** The Student Governor election procedure had been revised following the extension of the term of office to two years. The Student Governors indicated their agreement and the revised procedure was approved. Revised terms of reference for the Committee were approved.

10. GOVERNANCE

- 10.1** The Clerk presented a proposal for the 2008 Review of Governance. There would be an opportunity to look back over events in the previous year and identify

potential improvements in procedures. The proposal was agreed.

- 10.2 The revised Instrument and articles of Government issued in December 2007 and effective from 1 April 2008 were formally adopted. It was agreed that in accordance with the requirement to publish Board Minutes on the College website that the Minutes would be published once approved by the Board.
- 10.3 The Instrument of Government had now removed the categorisation of some Governors and consequent to this the Clerk proposed a new determination of membership which was approved.
- 10.4 Revised terms of reference for the Board of Governors were approved.
- 10.5 An updated Code of Conduct was approved.

11. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1 Received a report from the Clerk showing Governor development undertaken since May 2006 and noted the increased number of development events on governance.
- 11.2 The Clerk sought views on the continuation of the short developments sessions held on full Board meeting dates. Despite some reservations about attendance these were felt to be useful and could deal quickly with newly emerging issues. It was agreed the Development Day on 20 May would be largely devoted to the future strategy for the College.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 12.1 Governor Development Day Tuesday 20 May 2008.
Next scheduled meeting Monday 7 July 2008

Signed _____
Chairman

Date _____

BOARD OF GOVERNORS ACTION ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

MINUTE	ACTION	BY	WHEN
5.1	University of Plymouth contract for HE work to be provided to	Interim director of Finance and Planning	7.7.08

	Governors		
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