

CORPORATION BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting 4.30pm on Wednesday 26th March 2014 Gwynne Holford Room

Present:

- Mr Graham van der Lely (Chair) (GVdL)
- Mr Martin Baber (MHB)
- Mr Bob Barnett (RB)
- Mrs Rosamund Blomfield-Smith (RBS)
- Mrs Barbara Buck (BB)
- Mr David Crawford (DC1)
- Mr Mark Davison (MJD)
- Mr Ben Grieve (BG)
- Mrs Jane Holderness-Roddam (JHR)
- Mr Edward Keene (EK)
- Mr Russell Marchant (RM)
- Mr Jeremy Matthews (JM)
- Mr Chris Moody (CM)
- Professor Ron Ritchie (RR)
- Mr David Seymour (DS)
- Mr Charles Whitehouse (CW)

In Attendance:

- Mr John Deane (JD)
- Mr Graham Ledden (GL)
- Mr Luke Rake (LR)
- Mrs Lesley Worsfold (LW)

Apologies:

- Mr Mike Burton
- Mr Duncan Clegg

Minutes: Mr Rob Lee

		ACTION	ACTION DATE
31/14	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Mr M Burton and Mr D Clegg.</p>		
32/14	<p>Declaration of Interest – Paper C32/03/14</p> <p>The Clerk advised that member's interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members Interests. There were no declarations of members interests for agenda items.</p>		

		ACTION	ACTION DATE
33/14	<p>Election of Vice Chair. Paper C33/03/14</p> <p>The Clerk advised that Mr Keene's term of office as Vice Chair had come to an end in March 2014. A note had been sent to all governors and the Clerk advised that Mr Keene had been nominated for a further term of office and that this was the only nomination received. It was however permissible for verbal nominations to be made to the meeting. There were no other nominations. Mr Keene left the room. The Chair advised that Mr Keene had been very supportive in his four years as Vice Chair and he regarded him very highly. RBS advised that the Chair leaves in one year's time and it was an implicit part of modern governance to look not only internally but externally as well when filling this post. RB felt it was important that Mr Keene did not automatically think he would become Chair. GvdL advised that the matters were not related and suggested that this should be discussed at the next Search and Governance Committee Meeting.</p> <p><i>Mr E Keene was elected as Vice Chair for a further term of four years.</i></p> <p><i>The appointment of next Chair will be discussed by the Search and Governance Committee.</i></p>	Clerk	24/06/14
34/14	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting – Paper C34/03/14</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2014 were agreed to be a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.</p>		
35/14	<p>Matters Arising and Actioned</p> <p>35.1. (12.4.) Entry Level provision will not be offered for full-time students from September 2014. (LR)</p> <p>35.2. (19/14.) The Governors' Strategic Planning Day will take place on 27th March 2014 at the Malcolm Wharton Centre.</p>		
36/14	<p>Matters Arising for further discussion</p> <p>36.1. (15.2.) Discuss and approve proposal for Biomass Boiler. Paper C36.1/03/14</p> <p>The Chair advised that this proposal had come to the last Board Meeting when it should have gone to the Finance Committee first for discussion. The Finance Meeting, however, had been replaced by a Board Meeting to discuss TDAP. The College Executives were asked to re-work the proposal and it needs to be discussed at this meeting as there is now a matter of</p>		

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<p>urgency. GL advised that the overall cost of the project was estimated at £840K funded by £300K grant from SFA, £400K loan at 7% from Asset Finance and £140K from our own funds. GL advised that we have now received confirmation from the SFA of a £300K grant for the direct heat system and this would not upset our claim for renewable heat incentive. GL also advised that we have received an offer of a £500K loan from Lloyds at 4% and this would mean that we only need to use £40K of our own funds. The payback would be 6/7 years. GL advised that the paper outlines the energy that we use and there was a need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuel. GL confirmed that we had also considered alternative energy sources such as wind turbines and mains gas, which would cost £3/4m to get to the campus. GL advised that we still needed planning permission and satisfactory finalisation of the contract with the supplier. GL confirmed that we had looked at energy inflation which had gone up four times the rate of RPI but we have used twice RPI in our calculations. DC1 questioned our experience of biomass systems and the rate of increase of biomass fuel. GL advised that the proposal was for us buy energy not fuel and that will rise with RPI. RM advised there was an incentive for the contractor to run the boiler efficiently and he had been involved in a similar contract at his previous college. In response to RB GL advised that we had received £520K from the SFA of which £300K was earmarked for this project and if we wanted to use for another purpose we would have to write to SFA for permission and it would not be certain we would get the authority to change and it could take some time for this process to happen. In response to RB GL believed that the payback period of 6/7 years was better than any other project with residential build being the next best at 10 years. RB questioned whether the bank loan carried any covenants because of our high leverage and GL confirmed that there was no other security required although he still had to see the fine print. In response to DS RM advised that by installing biomass it would protect us against significant expenditure on our current oil and electricity systems. In response to JM RM advised that the contractor was responsible for the supply of wood chip and this was under written for 6 years at which time we would probably want to re-negotiate our contract. GL advised that our current boiler system stays in place as a back-up. The biomass system will run at full capacity and we would top up with our fossil fuel system. CM felt that this proposal was attractive because due to the systems installed we have very high running costs. CM also felt that it was beneficial that we were getting a substantial element of the cost from the SFA and that it was advantageous politically that a land based college was installing renewable energy sources.</p>		
<p><i>It was agreed that we should install biomass boilers and district heat distribution system at a cost of £840K funded by a grant from the SFA of £300K, a loan from Lloyds Bank of £500K at 4% (after considering the terms of the offer) and £40K of our own funds and that we have planning permission and a satisfactory contract finalised with the contractor. The Board will be updated at the next meeting.</i></p>	GL	29/05/14

		ACTION	ACTION DATE
	<p>36.2. (21.1.) Review the College Top 10 Risks relating to QAA Review and TDAP. Paper C36.2/03/14</p> <p>GL advised that we had reviewed the risks and two changes had been made, marked in red and these had been agreed by the College Executive.</p>		
37/14	<p>FE Report</p> <p>37.1. FE Report to include current situation on applications for next year. Paper C37.1/03/14</p> <p>LR advised that in general terms there was good retention, improving teaching and strong recruitment. LR further advised that retention had improved in the areas that had gone backwards last year and whilst retention in the sector had also improved our current rate was statistically significantly above the national average. In response to MHB LR advised that one of the reasons why are that the weaker areas have improved and this was due to a restructure in equine and new staff and improved facilities in Animal Management. LR also believed that the appointment of Claire Whitmore as his Curriculum Director had made a significant difference. LR also advised that the retention of students with disabilities was higher than able bodied students. In response to MHB RM advised that FE make an excellent presentation on Open Days to students and their families and agreed with MHB that students are told not to come to Hartpury unless they wanted to work. LR advised that current recruitment was up 22.7% on the previous year at this time and confirmed to GvdL that Agriculture had strong growth being 23.4% ahead of last year. LR confirmed that there was room for managed growth in all areas as for instance we do not have maximum class numbers and as an example Sport has classes of 30+ and all the recent teaching observations are graded 1 or 2. RM agreed that growth is exceptional and warned that other colleges were also seeing increases in applications and as there had been no increase in the potential student population there should be a health warning on the figures. RM advised that we will closely monitor other indicators of conversion such as accommodation, transport and livery. MJD queried if we had a problem recruiting and keeping staff in Agriculture as our salary structure seems to be lower than other colleges. RM advised that our salary structure did not seem to be a problem in recruiting good staff and CM agreed that whilst it was difficult to recruit he did not think this area was price sensitive.</p> <p>37.2. Review performance from FE Balanced Scorecard. Paper C37.2/03/14</p> <p>The data was noted.</p>		

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38/14	<p>The Student Voice</p> <p>38.1. Verbal report from Student Governor.</p> <p>BG advised that there had been a number of complaints about the Swanbrook Bus service which the student body had written to them about but they were not happy with the response. RM advised that we spent a significant amount of money on this service and we therefore had to be happy with what was provided. LW advised that the service was out for tender and suggested that BG or a member of the student council could meet with the companies that wish to take on this service. BG also advised that the change to the opening hours of the Library over the examination period had been very helpful.</p> <p><i>A student representative will be invited to meet companies wishing to tender for the bus service.</i></p> <p>38.2. Verbal update on Link Governor Visits.</p> <p>LR advised that most areas had now been visited and the feedback from the staff had been good. LR believed that the process had improved this year. In response to MHB the Clerk advised that departmental heads should report on individual visits and an annual report goes to the Quality and Standards Committee.</p> <p>38.3. Review outcomes of Student Induction Survey HE/FE.</p> <p>The Induction Survey was completed in November 2013</p> <p>HE Survey</p> <p>JD advised that the survey indicates an overall increase in satisfaction across all areas. In the majority of areas the Animal and Land students appeared the most satisfied with their induction process. JD advised that the key actions taken were that Student Advisors were more visible from start of course; there was more awareness of learning support services and the need to highlight to new students the value of the student diary and survival guide. JD was particularly pleased with the progress made in areas around pre-arrival, welcome day, programme organisation and management and tutor support. Action is through the departments and appropriate committees.</p> <p>FE Survey</p> <p>LR advised that results were similar to the previous year but there was an increased satisfaction in the Agriculture Department. The students in Equine and Specialist Sport areas are less satisfied than others. The results showed that the more academic the areas then generally the</p>	LW/BG	Immediate

		ACTION	ACTION DATE
	<p>results were more critical. There has been a marked increase in student awareness and engagement with equality and diversity. There was some dis-satisfaction with the enrolment process and LR advised that the location will be moved this year to the new FE Centre. Students were less pleased with some service areas such as catering. LR advised that no significant issues had been raised by the survey. Actions loop back through the departments.</p> <p>The timing and purpose of the survey is being reviewed.</p>		
39/14	<p>HE Report</p> <p>39.1. HE Report Paper C39.1/03/14</p> <p>JD advised that applications had passed the 2000 mark and outlined the work that was taking place to improve the conversion rate. JD explained that three Applicant Days had been held in February and March attended by over 170 applicants and these had been very successful with over 98% of those attending advising that they were now more likely to accept our offer. JD advised that this has led to an increase in our firm applications. JD also advised that there had been an increase in our FE students staying at the College to progress to HE. JD advised that applications had also been improved due to our portfolio review bringing forward new programmes. JD advised that planning for the QAA Review was on track and that a Landex QAA Reviewer had visited the College and had provided helpful advice and guidance. JD also advised that we would be running a trial Review at the beginning of June. JD explained that he had visited, together with the RM and GL, Doncaster College who are planning to submit at about the same time as us for TDAP and this had provided useful information. Doncaster was finding research and scholarship as one of the more serious challenges. RR advised that he had attended his first TDAP Committee Meeting and was encouraged by the work that had been done. He did however have a concern that the Self Evaluation Document would be submitted without being seen by the Board. It was work in progress and the deadline was the 11th April prior to any future Board Meeting. JD advised that the Registrar of UWE had seen the document and had suggested some changes. Our external consultant was also involved and it was felt that after it had been proofed by the Principal it should be sent to RR and a number of other governors, to be decided, for review and comment before it is submitted. JD confirmed that we were on schedule for our TDAP application.</p> <p><i>It was agreed that the Self Evaluation Document should be sent to RR and a number of other governors (to be decided) for review and comment before it is submitted.</i></p>	JD	Prior to 09/04/14

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	<p>39.2. Review performance against HE Balanced Scorecard. Paper C39.2/03/14</p> <p>JD advised that the Balanced Scorecard contained information on recruitment, retention and achievement. GvdL explained that the drop in students achieving good honours degrees from 57% to 49% had been discussed at the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting and in response JD advised that the increase in tariff entry requirements should have produced better not worse results and was looking at detailed evidence.as to why this had happened. RR advised that this was against the trend and was a significant drop which is a real concern and the Quality and Standards Committee have asked for a Report to the next meeting.</p>		
40/14	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>40.1. Discuss January 2014 Management Accounts. Paper C40.1/03/14</p> <p>GL advised that the results for six months show a budgeted deficit of £651.4K and represents a £402.3K unfavourable variance. GL explained that these numbers reflect the re-forecast surplus for the year of £182K. GL advised that 16-18 Apprenticeships were now likely to fall £200k rather than £100K short of budget but as previously notified salaries had been overstated by £100K in the re-forecast. GL also advised that the Farm results were poor but February figures were far more positive. In response to GvdL GL confirmed that we are still on track to achieve the re-forecast surplus. In response to RBS LW outlined the work that was taking place to increase our conferencing income. RB noted that without the £192K write back from a previous year and £300K adjustment on top slice we would be looking at £300K loss for the year. RM advised that we have had write backs in previous years and that the top slice rebate would go towards some of the extra costs we have had to take on due to TDAP and administering our own HE numbers. In response to RB RM confirmed that we are expecting to increase our return to income next year. GL advised that we need to find savings of £1m to stand still in the next budget. GvdL advised that this needs further discussion which will take place at the next Finance Meeting.</p> <p>40.2. Update on Capital Projects. Paper C40.2/03/14</p> <p>GL advised that the new FE Centre is on time and will be ready for occupation by the beginning of the next academic year. GL advised, however, that the IT and furniture budgets were too low and need to be increased by £67K for IT and £43K for furniture. GL explained that we are unlikely to be proceeding with major works on Laughtons Farmhouse due to the continuing bat problem and we have asked the SFA if we can re-</p>		

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	<p>allocate the £120K renewal grant from this project to the new FE Centre.</p> <p><i>It was agreed that the budget for the new FE Centre should be increased from £3550K to £3660K.</i></p> <p>40.3. Review Post Occupancy Evaluation of the Malcolm Wharton Centre. Paper C40.3/03/14</p> <p>GL advised that the building was delivered on time and under budget, with outcomes for students exceeding original expectations. Student numbers continue to increase with recruitment for 2014/15 25% up on the previous year. Major health and safety concerns have been addressed.</p> <p>40.4. Approve amendments to Corporate Charge Cards. Paper C40.4/03/14</p> <p><i>It was agreed that a charge card should be issued to the Director of Facilities with a limit of £3000 and that the card issued to the Marketing Director should have the credit limit reduced from £5000 to £3000.</i></p> <p>40.5. Review performance against Finance Balanced Scorecard. Paper C40.5/03/14</p> <p>The Finance Balanced Scorecard was noted.</p>		
41/14	<p>Note Principals Report. Paper C41/03/14</p> <p>The Principal outlined the main points in his Report and advised that we would be receiving £30K from Gloucester Rugby towards a scholarship fund for elite rugby players. RM advised that the senior rugby team should be congratulated for reaching the BUCS Final and the under 18 side for reaching the ASSE Final. RM advised that we had withdrawn our bid to host the European Pony Championships in 2015 due to significant delays in FEI reaching a decision and the problems this was giving us due to our budget deadlines.</p>		
42/14	<p>Note Health and Safety Report. Paper C42/03/14</p> <p>LW outlined the main points in the Report particularly the Health and Safety Training objectives for 2014. LW also asked governors to note that since the introduction of the revised Waste Recycling Strategy the College has improved its waste recycling figures from 9% to 90% of our total waste being recycled.</p>		

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43/14	<p>Review Mission Statement. Paper C43/03/14</p> <p>The Clerk advised that we review our Mission Statement on an annual basis and reminded governors that it had been amended last year. GvdL advised that if it was felt that we should consider amendments then he would refer it to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for further discussion.</p> <p><i>It was agreed that the Mission Statement did not need amending and would be reviewed again in one year.</i></p>		
44/14	<p>Approve completion of the Corporation Self-Assessment Questionnaire. Paper C44/03/14</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the Search and Governance Committee had considered our self-assessment process and agreed that we would issue the internal self-assessment documentation but also look for external contractor who could carry out this process later in the year. It was agreed that the Chair would hold 1:1 discussions with governors which had now taken place.</p> <p><i>The Self-Assessment Questionnaire will be completed by all governors and returned by the 18th April 2014.</i></p>	All	18/04/14
45/14	<p>Recommendations and Actions from Search and Governance Committee.</p> <p>45.1. Discuss and approve amendments to the process for the scrutiny of FE and HE quality. Paper C45.1/03/14</p> <p>RM advised that as part of our application for TDAP it is necessary to clearly recognise governance in HE and show sufficient connection from HE Department through to the Board. RM advised that we have established an Associate Faculty Board by adapting the remit from UWE and this Board could become our Academic Board. RM proposed that the Associate Faculty Board should include two governors in its membership. RR advised that this had been discussed at the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting and he had stated that he believed there were considerable benefits in the interaction of HE and FE. RR felt that there was great value in the current process and was concerned over losing something that was quite valuable. RM stated that there would be members of HE and FE on both Q&S and AFB. DC1 believed, therefore that there would also be a change to Q&S and this was not being considered but should be alongside the HE changes. GvdL questioned which committee would scrutinise the quality of HE. RM advised that he would not want to see a reduction in the scrutiny of HE on Q&S and RR</p>		

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	<p>advised that there was a danger of duplication. In response to GvdL RM confirmed that there were time pressures as we should have agreed a process by the next Associate Board Meeting in June. RR felt that we should not underestimate the significance of this discussion as it is fundamental to the way we operate.</p> <p><i>The Principal will take into consideration the discussion and after holding further discussions with the Chair, RR and DC1 bring a proposal on the scrutiny of HE to the next meeting.</i></p> <p>45.2. It is recommended that Mr E Keene be offered a further term of office of four years from 26th March 2014.</p> <p><i>It is agreed that Mr E Keene be offered a further term of office of four years from 26th March 2014.</i></p> <p>45.3. It is recommended that Mrs R Blomfield-Smith be offered a further term of office of 2 years from 12th August 2014.</p> <p>It is agreed that Mrs R Blomfield-Smith be offered a further term of office of 2 years from 12th August 2014.</p> <p>45.4. Receive, note and accept the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee 6th February 2014. Paper C45.4/03/14</p> <p>The Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee 6th February 2014 were noted and accepted.</p>	RM	29/05/14
46/14	<p>Recommendations and Actions from the Quality and Standards Committee.</p> <p>46.1. Discuss Report from Vice Chair of Quality and Standards Committee. Paper C46.1/03/14</p> <p>RR advised that a number of issues discussed at the Meeting had been raised today such as the fall in the percentage of students gaining good degrees and how we scrutinise the quality of HE in the future. RR advised that one of the other important issues that had been discussed was the need to ensure that we complete the loop in the way we scrutinise the outcomes of the data analysis. The outcomes should be linked to an action plan, wherever possible, giving governors' confidence that improvement is being made.</p> <p>46.2. Receive, note and accept minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee 12th March 2014. Paper C46.2/03/14</p> <p><i>The Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee 12th March</i></p>		

		ACTION	ACTION DATE
	<i>2014 were noted and accepted.</i>		
47/14	<p>Minutes of the Associate Faculty Board 27th November 2014. Paper C47/03/14</p> <p>The Minutes of the Associate Faculty Board 27th November 2014 were noted and accepted.</p>		
48/14	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>48.1. Application of the College Seal.</p> <p><i>The Corporation approved the application of the seal to the Agreement between Hartpury College and Markey Developments LLP for design and build of Further Education Centre and it was signed by the Chair and Mr C Whitehouse.</i></p>		
49/14	<p>Dates of Future Meetings-all scheduled to commence at 10.00am unless otherwise stated.</p> <p>Thursday 29th May 2014 (start 09.30 am) Thursday 10th July 2014 (start 09.30am) Thursday 9th October 2014 Thursday 11th December 2014</p> <p>Thursday 29th January 2015 Thursday 26th March 2015 (All Day to include Strategic Planning Meeting) Thursday 28th May 2015 Thursday 9th July 2015 Thursday 8th October 2015 Thursday 10th December 2015</p>		

**Mr Graham van der Lely
Chair of Hartpury College Corporation**

29th May 2014