



SOUTHGATE COLLEGE GOVERNING CORPORATION

Minutes of the combined meeting of the Finance & Staffing Committee and the Governing Body held on 24th September 2009

Attendance

Members

Andrew Nicholls (Chairman)
Ann Zinkin (Chairman Finance & Staffing Committee)
David Byrne (Principal)
Reshma Bell
Paul Camp
Mira Gottardi
Ron Lis
Ingrid Mustoe
Martin Prescott

In attendance

Richard Teare (Interim Director of Finance)
Lizzie Jones (Head of Service Transformation)
David Chaplin {Chaplin Frobisher Welling, Clerks to the Corporation)

Finance & staffing (Ann Zinkin in the Chair)

1. Minutes of the meeting of 23rd July 2009

Received: Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd July 2009

The minutes were confirmed as true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Matters arising

Para 2.Collaborative Ventures.(London Borough of Enfield, Joint Finance Post)
To be taken as item 6.

3. Apologies for absence

Nigel Levey

4. Declaration of Governor interest

There were no interests notified.

5. Notification of any other urgent business

None

6. Management accounts for the period ending 31st July 2009

Received: the management accounts for the period ending 31st July 2009, including the balance sheet at that date and cash flow forecast to July 2010

The Committee reviewed the accounts and noted:

- Overall financial performance. The operating deficit for the year to date was £136k, chiefly due to below budget income.
- Income for the year to date was £18,658k, below budget because of failure to reach recruitment targets on LSC programmes, although this was partly offset by above budget Train to Gain income.
- Pay costs were higher than budget, chiefly due to restructuring costs.
- Non-pay costs were more or less on budget.

However, the final accounts would have to take account of the irrecoverable costs of the aborted building project (although an initial sum of £232k had been received from LSC in respect of professional fees), and FRS 17 (future pension liability) adjustment.

The Nursery accounts had remained better than budget, with a final deficit of £12.7k.

7. Restructuring

Received: an update from the Head of Service Transformation on progress

Lizzie Jones reported that 72 posts at risk had been identified.

To date:

- 2 persons had taken voluntary redundancy.
- 19FTE staff had been issued with notices of redundancy - 1 appeal had been received to date
- 6 staff had been offered re-deployment positions
- 8 staff have left through retirement or resignation
- remaining staff were retained within the new structure
- annual savings of £461 k had been effected; redundancy cost amounted to £291k.

An equality impact assessment had been completed and provided to the union.

In answer to a question from the Chairman, Ingrid Mustoe felt that there had certainly been a drop in morale, as was to be expected, although there was a general acceptance that failure to achieve targets made job losses inevitable. She was not certain that there was sufficient clarity about the procedures, or ongoing support to those affected. However Reshma Bell thought that the information had been widely published and was not aware of serious general discontent.

The report was received.

8. Update on Enfield BC Collaborative Venture

Received: a revised proposal for closer working in provision of financial systems and processes

The new proposal took account of Members comments at the June meeting. It was now proposed that the existing interim Finance Manager work for three days per week to lead the College Finance Strategy, with the Council being offered an agreement that would require them to deliver two days per week for an initial twelve month period to deliver the developmental requirements of the Finance function to achieve non-pay cost savings through more efficient systems, services, procurement and processes.

However, this would not achieve the pay budget savings originally envisaged.

Ron Lis remained unconvinced that de-centralisation of the Finance function would be effective

9. Enrolment 2009/10

Received: statistics of learner enrolment as at 23rd September 2009

The Principal was disappointed that although full time adult enrolments were above the last year level, 16-18 enrolments were slightly lower, with particular weakness in Art & Design. However, it was still too early to be concerned about any lack of appeal of Southgate College; rather it seemed to be a London-wide problem.

The Chairman was re-assured to learn of the strenuous efforts being made to bring NEETs back into education.

10. Insurance Renewal

Received: recommendations for renewal from Oval Insurance

Members were satisfied with the overall proposals, but expressed concern that Officers and Members Indemnity Insurance was excluded.

David Byrne explained that the O&M Indemnity insurance was with a different provider, and agreed to circulate Members with details. There was no doubt that the Insurance was in place.

The proposals were endorsed

11. Automotive Paint Academy

The Principal outlined proposals for a new academy to be established at the College in association with Smart Express, SMC, OMRON and Morelli Group which would focus on providing real “high tech” employability skills. It was hoped that the development could grow into the flagship centre being looked for by the SMC C.E.O.

Members were greatly excited by this new development.

Governors approved the Principal’s one day visit to Spain to take the project forward.

Corporation Board meeting (Andrew Nicholas in the Chair)

The Chairman explained that he had convened this special meeting under the authority given him by Article 12(5) of the Instrument of Government to consider arrangements for the imminent OFSTED/PFA inspection, and to agree a number of policies that would have been brought to the October meeting

12. Revised Standing Orders

Received: the revised form of Standing Orders

The Clerk explained that he had revised the Standing Orders in accordance with the instructions given to him on appointment, and in accordance with the detailed content approved by the Board at an earlier meeting.

The Revised Standing Orders were adopted.

13. HR Policies

Received: six new policies and updated versions of 12 existing policies

David Byrne explained that following a comprehensive review the Leadership Team had decided that in the following areas College Policies were either inadequate or non-existent:

- Financial Regulations and Procedures Edition 8
- Single Equality Scheme
- Anti-bullying and Harassment
- Child Protection-vulnerable adults
- Admission of ex-offenders
- Recruitment of ex-offenders
- Procedure for dealing with allegations against staff of abuse

In respect of the following policies minor changes had been made to reflect the recent restructuring within the College, but no fundamental changes had been made to the content:

- Human Resources Policy
- Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy
- Sickness Policy
- Maternity leave and Maternity Pay Policy
- Probation procedures
- Special leave of absence policy
- Guidelines for dealing with a death within the College community
- Paternal leave and Paternal pay Policy
- Annual Leave policy
- Management of Change Policy
- Leave for Religious Festivals Policy

The new and revised Policies were adopted

14. OFSTED Inspection

The Principal outlined the arrangements for the Inspection. The Inspectors would meet the Senior staff and Chairman of Governors, and carry out a combination of full lesson observations plus a number of “shorter” lesson observations, but were expected to spend more time than in previous inspections talking directly to students.

Ann Zinkin was sure that this was the right approach, and from her experience of talking to students she was sure they would say how pleased they were with their experience of Southgate.

The Principal again emphasised how important it was to develop the “Student Voice” over the coming year. David Byrne also reminded the Governing Body that OFSTED would probably need to focus on the previous years’ performance and improvements made since the last formal inspection. This meant that current initiatives would be ‘noted’ but not

necessarily recognised.

15. Date and time of next meetings

The date of the next meeting of the Finance & Staffing Committee was confirmed as Thursday 22nd October at 5.00 p.m.

The Board Meeting would follow at 6.30p.m.

The meeting ended at 6.45 p.m.