



# ***SOUTHGATE COLLEGE GOVERNING CORPORATION***

## **Governing Corporation**

### **Summary of main decisions taken at the meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

- 1. Adoption of Key Performance Indicators**  
Governors agreed that a more comprehensive and meaningful set of indicators should be prepared for adoption at the next meeting.
- 2. Planning Future Strategic Direction**  
Governors agreed to hold an additional meeting in April to determine the strategy needed to move the College from good to outstanding.
- 3. Enfield Skills and Employment Strategy**  
It was agreed to prepare a formal response to this very important consultation.
- 4. Developing College Reputation and Brand identity**  
A process for developing and strengthening the College Brand and reputation was agreed.
- 5. Management Accounts**  
The Governors were unhappy to receive a disappointing set of management accounts, noting with particular concern the overspending in the IT department.
- 6. Accommodation Strategy**  
Whilst welcoming the progress made in submitting the new build proposal to the planning authority, governors were dismayed by the moratorium imposed on FE capital projects until Sir Andrew Foster had undertaken a full-scale review.
- 7. Achievement of Funding Performance in 2008/9**  
Governors noted the challenge in achieving the full funding target in 2008/9 but were encouraged by the plans for new initiatives to make could the apparent shortfall.
- 8. College Self Assessment Report**  
Governors received the final report embodying the judgements confirmed at the December meeting



# **SOUTHGATE COLLEGE GOVERNING CORPORATION**

## **Governing Corporation**

**Minutes of meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009  
held in the Committee Room of Southgate House, commencing at 6.30 p.m.**

### **PRESENT**

Andrew Nicholas (Chairman)  
David Byrne (Principal)  
Reshma Bell (Staff member)  
Paul Camp  
James Edsberg  
Ola Fadoju (Staff member)  
Mira Gottardi (Student member)  
Nigel Levey  
Mohamed Manjra  
Martin Prescott  
Ann Zinkin

### **In Attendance**

Angélique Gainza (Vice Principal Curriculum)  
Shah Alam (Director of Finance)  
Lizzie Garin (Head of Service Transformation)  
David Chaplin {  
Ana Lewis {(Chaplin Frobisher Welling Clerks to the Corporation)

The Chairman welcomed the new Student Governor, Mira Gottardi, and David Byrne to their first Governing Body meeting

### **1. Minutes of the meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

*Received: Part 1 minutes of the meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008.*

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

### **2. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising

### **3. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Chris Gill, Ron Lis, Claude Pehrson, and David Williamson

#### **4. Declaration of Governor interest.**

No declarations had been notified

#### **5. Notification of items of any other business**

Ann Zinkin had one matter to raise if time permitted

#### **6. Governance matters**

##### **6.1 Principal's report**

*Received: Principals report of 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009*

David Byrne reported that Bill Easton, first Principal of Southgate College, had died shortly before Christmas

Members noted the College's commitment to the Skills Pledge, the launch of the Safe Road User Award, and the first podcast of SG Radio, the College Radio Station, and the introduction of a College loyalty card

Members endorsed David Byrne's intention for the College to be more effectively engaged with Government and were pleased to hear that the visit of the Secretary of State, John Denham, earlier in the day had gone very well. The enthusiastic contribution of students was praised.

##### **6.2 Development of Key Performance Indicators**

*(Received: draft Key Performance indicators)*

David Byrne reported that he echoed the concern expressed by a number of Governors that the range of Key Indicators of the College's performance were insufficiently comprehensive, not always clear in their significance, and not mapped into the requirements of the Framework for Excellence.

Members considered a draft set of new KPI's grouped around four themes:

- Attraction (enrolment targets and learner/employer assessment of the College)
- The Learner experience (Teaching & learning grades, student voice, participation)
- Success (learner achievement/retention/success rates and destination; Governor effectiveness)
- Performance (Financial indicators)

The new approach and reporting methodology were endorsed, the management team would now work these up into a final draft for presentation to the next meeting of the Board, and the Principal asked members to let him know of any areas for additional consideration.

##### **6.3 Planning future Strategic Direction**

David Byrne asked members to consider holding an additional strategy debate in the near future. The challenges facing the College were urgent and could not await the annual December meeting. It was agreed to circulate possible dates for an evening meeting in the College Restaurant in April.

## **6.4 Enfield Skills and Employment Strategy**

*(Received: the Summary Report of the Enfield Skills and Employment Strategy)*

This report had been commissioned by the Enfield Education Business Partnership as an analysis of the Borough's economic and employment weaknesses, together with seven issues/implications and possible actions for schools and college Governing Bodies to consider:

- Methodology for gathering labour market information and expectations of employers;
- How to bring about curriculum alignment to skill needs;
- Reporting progress in achieving Economic Well-being and Work Related Learning Activity;
- Planning new activities to improve employer engagement;
- Considering how academic curriculum be adjusted to incorporate vocational elements;
- Encouraging direct employer involvement in the day-to-day delivery of the curriculum;
- Developing an alternative to the Diploma offer.

Chris Gill unfortunately could not be present to expand on the proposal, but it was agreed that the issues were too important to be left unconsidered until the next meeting, and it was agreed that the management team would draft a response for members to consider and refine as their formal response. The Principal asked members to let him know of any points they would particularly wish to see included in the draft

## **6.5 Developing the College reputation and brand identity**

James Edsberg led this discussion.

The College existed in a dynamic and competitive environment. In determining an effective strategy for success there was danger of getting lost unless we were sure of our starting point and of our destination.

Having identified key stakeholders –members suggested a number of additions to his initial draft -it was essential to have a clear understanding of the College's current reputation with them, and of what we would wish it to be. There was at present little explicit evidence of how the College regarded itself, or of its external reputation.

James explained to members his professional view on what was meant by "Brand". In essence three factors contributed to a strong brand image:

- Visual identity – e.g. the Blue gate, brochures and prospectuses;
- Culture and values – what we stand for and do not stand for;
- The Promise that we make to people with whom we interact.

A key element in Brand-building was better, more consistent PR. Currently our PR could be graphically portrayed as a series of oscillations between +ve and -ve, when what was required was a strong and persistent line.

He suggested as a process,, holding a series of workshops initially within the College – with learners, staff and Governors – staff buy-in was crucial – to identify the key driver: what defines Southgate College that is relevant and different from competitors as a benefit obvious to our stakeholders.

Mira suggested that an important feedback could be obtained from potential learners, parents, employers attending open days or taking the podcasts or listening to local radio. She hoped that the College would build on its reputation for teaching of the very highest quality at A level.

The importance of an up-front presentation by the Principal to staff and learners on what we were seeking to achieve was noted – again the importance of ensuring staff/learner buy-in was stressed.

James offered his services in putting together a plan, including exercises to gauge true views and this offer was gratefully accepted.

The Chairman thanked James for his clear and stimulating exposition.

## **7. Finance Matters**

### **7.1. Finance and Staffing Committee**

Ann Zinkin gave a verbal report of the meeting held earlier in the evening. The Committee had reviewed the management accounts, received an account of the progress with the building project and the out-turn report on the previous year's funding performance, all of which were subsequent items on the current meeting agenda.

The details of the provisional LSC funding allocation for 2009/10 had been received.

The management accounts were disappointing.

Members were particularly concerned that once again the budget profile was apparently so far from reality, as this rendered interim accounts less meaningful.

The Director of Finance had reported that investigation of overspend in the IT department had revealed a severe weakness in budgetary and procurement processes and controls. Whilst investigation was on-going, the College was undertaking a thorough re-organisation of the department with the advice of an outside consultancy.

Ann Zinkin again emphasised that all of the various problems identified had been fully reviewed, and the Finance and Staffing Committee had every confidence that appropriate action was being taken by the new leadership to rectify the situation

Ann voiced her concern at the size of the deficit on operation of the Nursery. It was no longer more or less compulsory for FE Colleges to provide child care facilities, and there seemed little evidence that the College facility was significantly providing for children of learners or staff, or learner child care placements. There were at least two independent providers close to the College. The Principal had agreed to conduct a review of usage and alternative facilities for the next meeting of the Committee.

Andrew Nicholas was concerned that the question of the operation of the Nursery had been debated every year for the past few years. He asked the Committee, once they had received the Principal's report, to make a clear recommendation to the Governing Body either to discontinue operating a nursery, or if to continue, to do so for at least the next three years

## **7.2 Management Accounts**

*(Received: summarised management accounts for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008, balance sheet at that date and cash flow forecast to November 2009.)*

In view of the assurances of the Finance and Staffing Committee these were not further debated

## **7.3 Accommodation Strategy**

The Principal pointed out that although it was a very positive achievement for the Outline Planning application to have been submitted to the local authority on 23<sup>rd</sup> January (a meeting with planning officers to learn of their likely recommendation is expected to take place at the beginning of March) the uncertainty about funding was of greater impact.

The LSC had over-committed itself in relation to the Capital Programme, and its ultimate paymasters (Department for Industry, Universities and Skills – “DIUS”) had now called a Moratorium on consideration of all projects that had not received application in detail and had effectively started building, whilst Sir Andrew Foster reviewed the whole programme.

The College had entertained the Secretary of State for DIUS earlier in the day, and had rehearsed to him the particular considerations promoting Southgate’s case – contribution to area revitalisation, interconnection with other public sector projects (Southgate Public Library) high sustainability rating because of excellent transport links, very poor quality of existing College buildings – and this had been well received, but the S of S could give no guarantees.

Of immediate concern was the financial impact. The College had already spent £300-400K on fees etc for the feasibility study and outline design for planning, and although a claim had been made for the £250K (half of the total spend agreed by the LSC as an appropriate spend on the feasibility study and progression to AiP) there was at worst the possibility that this grant would not be forthcoming, at best the probability that it would be phased or otherwise delayed.

The College was urgently reviewing all options, and would be bringing proposals to the Finance and Staffing Committee and Board that might well involve ceasing work on the project.

## **7.4. Achievement of Funding performance**

*Received: The funding performance statistics 2008/09*

These had been reviewed in great detail by the Finance and Staffing Committee. Despite the challenges the Committee had been fully apprised of the actions being taken by the new leadership and were confident that the proposed new course would ensure that the College was not far short of target at year end.

## **8. Academic matters**

### **College Self-assessment report**

*(Received: Report from Vice Principal Curriculum on the final outcomes of the College self-assessment)*

This report confirmed the decisions made at the December meeting of the Board

**9. Other urgent business**

**10. Future meetings**

The date of the next meeting was brought forward to: Thursday 2nd April 2009 at 18.30 hrs

The meeting closed at 9.15 and was followed by a brief Part 2 agenda (restricted access) meeting to receive the minutes of the Part 2 meeting held on 11th December 2008)