

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on Monday 17 May 2010 at 5.30 pm
in Conference Room 1, the Astral Centre**

Members Present:

Ken Applegate : Member
Evelyn Hicks : Member
Kevin Howes : Member
Alistair King : Member
David Matthews : Member
Richard Perkins : Vice-Chair / Member (Acting chair)
Sarah Smith : Staff Member
Anne Swietlik : Member

In Attendance:

Phillip Belden : Vice Principal
Teresa Miller : Acting Principal
Ruth Harrison : Assistant Principal
Jason King : Assistant Principal
Charles Reynolds: Clerk to the Corporation

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Emma Beese, Alan Debenham, Bob Mee, Emily Page, Gwen Parsons and Tom Toolan.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-chair took the meeting and welcomed those present.

1) Disclosures of Interest:

The Clerk advised that Anne Swietlik had a conflict of interest with respect to agenda item 11, Property Matters.

At this stage members agreed to deal with agenda items 2, 6, 8, 11 and 14.2a.

2) Corporation membership – resignations and appointments

2a) Resignations

Members were advised that Mihai Apostol had resigned his membership as a result of gaining employment with Thomas Cook as cabin crew. The Clerk to write on behalf of Corporation to him thanking him for his services.

The Student Forum had already been approached to seek a new nomination for FE Student Governor.

2b) Appointments – Staff Governor

The Clerk informed members that following Russell Baxter's retirement from the board an election had been held for academic staff members to select a new staff Governor for

Action

Clerk

nomination to the board. As a result of this process Emma Beese, a lecturer in Travel & Tourism, had been successful. To this end, and in accordance with the Instruments and Articles of Government it was for Corporation to approve this appointment.

Richard Perkins proposed and Kevin Howes seconded that Emma Beese be appointed Staff Governor for a period of four years and in accordance with the Instruments and Articles of Government and Corporation Standing Orders.

Members voted unanimously in favour.

2c) Press Release

The Clerk sought member's views on the use of a press release to seek new members. The release had been reviewed by Search Committee members who had been positive about its use. It was confirmed that currently and with the exception of the Student Member, there were four vacancies.

Having reviewed the press release there were no objections to its use.

Part 2 Confidential Items

6) Curriculum Planning 2010/2011

The minutes for this item can be found in the Confidential Minute Book.

Part 1b open items: for discussion and action.

8) Tuition Fees Policy 2010/2011

Introduced by Teresa Miller who advised that the Tuition Fees Policy 2010/2011 had been thoroughly reviewed by the Estates and Finance committee which was recommending it for approval.

Referring members to the meeting paper and specifically the Executive Summary Teresa Miller detailed the main elements of the policy along with the proposed changes in terms of who should pay fees. Clarification was also provided especially for newer members to the board, on remission of fees and the fact that no extra funding was received when a fee was remitted. What it in fact meant was that there was less money available for the College to use.

Having reviewed the document and in the absence of any further discussion it was proposed by Richard Perkins and seconded by Kevin Howes that Corporation approve the Tuition Fee policy 2010/2011 as recommended by the Estates and Finance Committee.

Members voted unanimously in favour.

11) Property Matters – Verbal update

Again presented by Teresa Miller who advised that there were two issues needing to be raised with Corporation. These were the provision of student accommodation and the relocation of the College engineering provision. Each would be dealt with separately.

Clerk

11.1) Student Accommodation

Members were advised that at the most recent Estates and Finance Committee meeting a presentation had been made by DoveJefferyHomes regarding the proposed Compass Street development which included the provision of over 180 student accommodation rooms which would, if the scheme went ahead, be built in 3 phases. DoveJefferyHomes were interested in assessing the likely level of support for their project based on an assumption that the college would guarantee 75% of the rental income generated from the student units. Teresa Miller advised that at this very early stage, whilst the college had undertaken some market research with students to gauge demand, there had not been work carried out on financial implications as yet as there was insufficient information. Estates and Finance members had however requested a due diligence exercise to be carried out on DoveJefferyHomes and to date all the information received from this had been positive.

In response to the introduction Evelyn Hicks asked for the evidence of need for student accommodation and questioned whether the college had the resource and staff time to put in. Teresa Miller advised that research to date indicated a likely need for 60+ rooms to be used by HE & Maritime students. The college also wanted to start a Maritime Cadet programme but was prevented from doing so because of a lack of suitable student accommodation. In addition to College need there were other organisations in the town that could also use rooms. The example of the International Boatbuilding College was given.

The Clerk also reminded members that Corporation had discussed the need for student accommodation before, especially for HE students and had acknowledged the need.

David Matthews asked whether there were any OJEU issues regarding DoveJefferyHomes scheme. Again responding Teresa Miller believed there would not be as the College would be partnering the developers.

At this point a handout was circulated giving basic information about the proposed scheme. In response to a question the Chair also confirmed that as part of an earlier consultation Waveney District Council had designated the land to be used for student accommodation. The project was though in its very early stage.

David Matthews asked when it would be expected that DoveJefferyHomes would need a financial commitment from the College and what were the other options available to consider. Responding the Chair informed members that it was his understanding that Waveney District Council would not be putting the relevant piece of land out to tender but were simply putting it up for sale. Therefore it was his considered opinion that Corporation would need to think about this issue in detail at the July meeting.

Ken Applegate recognised the strategic need for student accommodation. However there was a need to understand all the potential ups and downs. For example and if the decision were to go ahead did Corporation wish the College to take on their role of Estates Management or would it seek to tender for the services of a land agent?

Evelyn Hicks also stressed the importance of viewing the situation in terms of the current economic climate as well. This point was noted.

The Chair stressed that at this stage all DoveJefferyHomes were looking for was an expression of interest from the College which encourage them to take their interest further. By giving this there would be no obligations of any kind placed on the College or Corporation.

In the absence of any further discussion it was therefore proposed that the Corporation confirm an expression of interest in the Dove Jeffery Home scheme. This was seconded by Kevin Howes.

7 Members voted in favour. 1 member abstained.

The vote was therefore in favour.

11.2) Provision of accommodation for engineering and related curriculum

This item was again presented by Teresa Miller. With reference to Anne Swietlik and the declared conflict of interest it was noted that as no decisions were to be taken and the agenda item was 'to be noted' there was no reason for her to leave the meeting.

Teresa Miller reminded members of the need to relocate the engineering machine shop which was currently housed in the wavy roofed building at the rear of the College site. This building was due to be demolished as part of the development of the Sixth Form College and a new location for the machine shop was needed for September 2011.

One possible solution was a new build on the Power Park but as yet the feasibility study on this whole development had yet to be produced although it was due shortly. In any event and regardless of the outcome of the study it was Teresa Miller's considered view that a new build would not be available by September 2011 even were it the preferred option. Therefore it was necessary to seek an alternative option even were this to be short term.

Having set the scene Teresa Miller advised that the College had been given an option on a building in Oulton Broad next to Pilot Drilling. The proposition could be to take the building on a short term lease and move engineering into a purpose built facility. This would have an additional benefit of releasing other accommodation at the College main site as the move would involve more than just the machine shop. This option would have the benefit of ensuring accommodation was available for September 2011.

Members discussed the option and recognised the need for action. However it was also agreed that Corporation needed to be presented with a detailed report covering all possible options for consideration, not just one, and which took account of issues such as the need to comply with OJEU requirements. The option review also to consider the consequences of not moving the facility in the time scale suggested.

To this end the Clerk was asked to convene a meeting of Corporation in approximately 3 weeks and Teresa Miller was asked to present a detailed 'options' report for consideration at that meeting. This action was unanimously agreed.

14a) Health & Safety Policy

Introduced by the Clerk who advised that at the Estates and Finance Committee members had been informed that the College Health and Safety Manager had only just returned to work following a period of illness and was in the process of reviewing the Health & Safety Policy. This process would however take a period of time. In order to support the Health & Safety Manager during this return to work period and at the same time insure that Corporation have an 'in date' Health & Safety Policy it had been agreed to recommend to Corporation that it re-approve the existing policy in the knowledge that a revised policy would be brought to Corporation as soon as possible.

Clerk / JM

To this end it was proposed by Richard Perkins and seconded by Kevin Howes that Corporation accept the recommendations from Estates and Finance to approve the existing Health & Safety Policy.

Seven members voted in favour. 1 member voted against. The vote was therefore in favour.

3) Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 25 January were agreed to be a correct record and signed by the chair.

4) Matters arising from the minute

4.1) Letters of condolence and thanks (previous agenda items 2&4)

The Clerk confirmed that letters of thanks and condolence had been sent as requested.

4.2) College annual review 2008/09

The Clerk confirmed the requested changes had been made to the College Annual Review.

5) Correspondence

5.1) BIS – Modification of the Instruments & Articles of Government / Amendment to Regulations

It was proposed by Richard Perkins and seconded by Kevin Howes that the Corporation adopt the changes.

Members voted unanimously in favour.

5.2) LSC – Lowestoft College Financial Statement 2008/09

To advise assessment of the Colleges financial health as 'satisfactory'.

5.3) Minutes extract from UCS Board meeting held on Tuesday 26 January 2010-05-27

To advise that Lowestoft College had been allocated £916,000 from the Learning Network Capital Plan.

5.4) LSIS Governance newsletter – Summer Term 2010

7) In year retention and attendance

Presented by Ruth Harrison who provided members with up to date information on attendance, retention and success rates.

Current attendance rates were recorded as 93.5%, above the target of 86% and ahead of the previous year. Retention rates were currently 95% compared with 92% for 2008/09.

Ruth Harrison advised that the rates may drop slightly by the year end but not by much.

Responding to the presentation members were very pleased at the really positive situation. They thanked Ruth Harrison and her team for the work they were doing in supporting students and raising performance levels. The report was noted.

9) Lesson Observation Report

Again presented by Ruth Harrison. Members were advised of the procedure used regarding lesson observations and also that Ofsted had viewed the Colleges observation procedures as rigorous and comprehensive.

Details were provided of the current lesson observation profile and how this compared with 2008/09. Members were also provided with information on the action plan process and follow up which helped to inform the staff training plan.

Members thanked Ruth Harrison for her report which was received.

At this point as the key agenda items had been dealt with and in view of the time it was determined that the remaining agenda items be deferred until the next meeting. The date, time and venue to be determined by the Clerk.

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