

**STRATFORD-UPON-AVON COLLEGE CORPORATION**

**CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES  
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2009**

<b>Present :</b>	Alan Richardson	Chair
	Mike Atkins	Governor
	Tony Jefferson	Governor
	Martin Penny	Principal
	Elaine Rowlands	Governor
<b>In attendance :</b>	David Jackson	Clerk to the Corporation
	Charles Anderson	Deputy Principal
	Tim Astbury	Assistant Principal Curriculum
	Norman MacDonald	Vice Principal – Finance
	Hazel Skwirzynska	Director Learner Services

**1. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS / APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed Tony Jefferson and Elaine Rowlands to their first meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

It was resolved **THAT:**

Apologies for absence be received from John Latham and Kay Taylor.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any interest in business to be discussed at the meeting, following which it was reported that Alan Richardson was a Governor of Coventry University.

**3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

It was resolved **THAT:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2008 be regarded as correct and signed by the Committee Chair.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

It was resolved **THAT:**

Any matters arising be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee on 13 March 2009.

**5. COLLEGE BUDGET 2008/09 AND BEYOND**

The Principal introduced the Management Accounts and the paper on the College Budget for 2008/09. He stressed that the College Executive had taken a long hard look at the financial position of the College to ensure that it understood exactly where the College was right down to budget-holder level and the Management Accounts, as presented, were based on that detailed understanding. Whilst he was pleased to report that additional monies had arrived for learner support, this did not impact in any significant way on the current year's budget. The paper identified three major themes: LSC funding impact; recession impact; and trading impact, which overall showed that the College was heading for a shortfall of £463,000 in the current year, before exceptional items.

There then followed a detailed discussion between members of the Committee and the College Executive on the issues surrounding the position in which the College finds itself, with the meeting arriving at a shared understanding of the position. During the course of the discussions the meeting considered the College's cash flow position and associated redundancy costs, a report on discussions with Lloyds TSB Bank held the previous week which was supportive of the College's position, and the risks identified to date, together with the actions proposed, to reduce/return the College to a positive position. The Committee recognised that the Principal could not guarantee a surplus by the end of the current year (2008/09).

The Principal also stated that an indicative LSC 16-18 funding allocation for 2009/10 showed a small reduction in the average level of funding for students.

The meeting then went on to discuss a draft paper on proposed College re-organisation to address matters in the longer term. The Committee recognised that doing nothing to the structure was not an option and the College needed to look long and hard at itself in the new climate.

The Committee looked at the proposal to defer the payment of the annual cost of living salary award and the likely impact of this on the College community, together with issues of integrity.

The Committee discussed issues around the quality of the work undertaken by the College and recognised that quality will be the key to the College's future and that, if the College cannot deliver something well, it should not attempt to deliver it. All agreed that the future plan needed to be solid and ready to move the College forward when the appropriate time came.

The Committee also gave consideration to other options such as mergers and acquisitions but concluded that it was not in the interests of the local community or the College's students for the College to be absorbed into a larger institution but that meaningful partnerships may be of benefit.

Consideration was also given to the level of reduction in expenditure that should be achieved, particularly taking into consideration that some areas of expenditure may need to increase, such as College maintenance in the event of a delay to capital building programme.

It was recognised that the College was going down an unpredictable but necessary route which it would be difficult to navigate for a while. Of paramount importance was the need to base the budget on a sound curriculum plan.

To assist in future planning, the Chair said that he would be recommending to the Corporation a Strategic Planning Working Group comprising 3 members of the Executive and 3 or 4 Governors to look at a new Strategic Plan for the future.

It was resolved **THAT:**

- a) The revised Management Accounts for 2008/09 be recommended to the Corporation for approval;
- b) The Finance and General Purposes Committee recommend that the Governors support the paper on College Re-organisation for 2009/10 and request delegated authority to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to agree a detailed action plan to move the College forward by 13 March 2009.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Finance and General Purposes Committee meet again on **13 March 2009 at 8.30am.**

Signed : .....(Committee Chair)