

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON COLLEGE CORPORATION

DRAFT MINUTES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP MEETING FRIDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2008

Present:	Alan Richardson	Chair
	Charles Anderson	Deputy Principal
	Satnam Bhogal	Governor / Co-opted Member
	David Jackson	Vice Principal – Resources / Clerk to the Corporation
In attendance	Norman MacDonald	Vice Principal - Finance
	John Latham	Governor
	Martin Penny	Principal
	Hazel Skwirzynska	Director of Learner Services
	Natalie Corcoran	Marketing Manager (item 5)
	Helen Mayers	Marketing Manager (item 5)

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

- a) Apologies were received from Tim Astbury and Kay Taylor;
- b) Hazel Skwirzynska, a new member of the College Executive Team, was welcomed to her first meeting.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any interest in business to be discussed at the meeting, following which Alan Richardson reminded the meeting that he was a Governor of Coventry University and John Latham was Pro Vice Chancellor of Coventry University.

3. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

It was resolved **THAT:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2008 be regarded as correct and signed by the Chair.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising that were not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda as substantive items.

5. **MARKETING REPORT**

Natalie Corcoran and Helen Mayers, Marketing Managers, made a presentation to the Group on current Marketing activities and answered questions from the Group. Copies of current College prospectuses were circulated, together with recent press cuttings. The Group congratulated the Team on its enthusiasm and the quality of recent publications. The Group recognised the attentions around the sustainability and procurement agendas and the challenges adhering to these policies presented.

The Group gave consideration to the format of future Marketing reports to ensure that it complied with its Terms of Reference and concluded that, whilst it wished to retain the report on Marketing activities, it devotes time to giving consideration to the Marketing Strategy and understanding what the Team was doing by way of innovation and internal presentations.

It was resolved **THAT:**

- a) The report be noted;
- b) The Committee receive at its next meeting the draft Marketing Strategy and that this would take account of innovation and internal presentations.

6. ESTABLISHMENT OF SIXTH FORM AT ST BENEDICT'S, ALCESTER

The consultation document on the establishment of a Sixth Form Centre at St Benedict's Catholic High School, Alcester together with an associated press release and the College's response was discussed. It was believed that the creation of a Sixth Form was being driven by the Diocese and that the education argument for the case was flawed. The LSC, AoC and the College are due to meet shortly with the School to discuss this matter further.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Strategic Planning Group endorse the College's opposition to this proposal;

7. NEW PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

The Group considered the New Project Progress Report detailing new projects and markets currently under active pursuit by the College.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The report be noted.

8. UP-DATE ON EXTERNAL INFLUENCES / STRATEGIC PLANNING PRINCIPLES FOR 2008/09 / DEVELOPING DESTINIES

The Principal up-dated the Group on external influences. In particular, he indicated that the LSC appeared to be in some disarray with the demise happening more quickly than anticipated. For example, the Regional Director was only working two days per week in relation to Coventry and Warwickshire and so far this academic year there have been no Principals' meetings. Answers to strategic questions were emerging slowly, if at all, and there were delays in marking bids for funding. The College was in a position of now having to second guess the LSC on some issues which carried a degree of risk but waiting for an LSC announcement was not practical. This situation was likely to continue until September 2010. As yet, however, there was no clarity on what arrangements would be put in place post-2010. The Local Authority and the LSC were working together on 14-19 provision via Local Area Partnership.

The Principal considered that, if we wanted to move into new curriculum areas, it would be to the College's advantage to do this ahead of 2010 as, after that date, it seemed likely that curriculum changes would need to go to the Local Area Partnership Committee and there was no guarantee that they would be successful. Turning to the establishment of a 14-16 Centre at Henley, the Principal informed the meeting that Warwickshire College had now pulled out of the arrangement with the School and the School had contacted the College to meet and explore the possibility of its involvement in place of Warwickshire College. The Committee went on to discuss the strategic implications of this and its impact on delivery at Stratford-upon-Avon College. The financial consequences were also briefly explored.

As the recession bights, impact on the local community was starting to be noticed and the College was reacting accordingly as firms got into difficulties. In addition, it was noted that the Local Authority was looking to save £5million in 2009/10 and discussed the impact that this may have on the College and those areas that may be vulnerable to cuts.

The Chair indicated that the Corporation would need to take a prudent view of its provision in 2009/10. The Principal indicated that the College would be looking at what it needed to focus on; in the current climate this may not be growth but more around surviving the recession. As we move forward, it was felt that Train To Gain would be important, together with re-skilling in the workplace.

The Chair urged the Executive Team to look at opinion on what was forecast rather than wait for it to happen and the need to check out thoughts amongst each other, eg changes in visa position brought about by indirect action by the Government.

The discussion was concluded with the recognition that next year's budget would be difficult to formulate and it was important that Governors enter into debate with the Management Team at the Strategic Planning Days in January.

9. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT DAYS

The Principal outlined to the meeting the programme for the Governor Strategic Planning Days and the need to re-examine the College's vision for the future.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The report be noted.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Strategic Planning Group meet again on **Friday 9 January 2009** at 8.30am.

The meeting closed at 1.00pm.