

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON COLLEGE CORPORATION

DRAFT MINUTES OF GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE FRIDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2010

Present:	Elaine Rowlands	Chair
	Satnam Bhogal	Governor (items 11 - 16 only)
	Martin Penny	Principal
	Geoff Thompson	Governor
In attendance:	Charles Anderson	Deputy Principal
	Rosie Herbert	Deputy Director, Learner Services (item 10 only)
	Hazel Skwirzynska	Director of Learner Services
	Kay Taylor	Vice Principal – Corporate & International Business Development
	Janet Kidson	PA to Clerk to the Corporation

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from David Jackson who was attending an AoC Review of Governance all-day event.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare any interest in business to be discussed at the meeting, following which, there were no declarations.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

It was resolved **THAT**:

Subject to amendment of minute 12, Equality and Diversity, to read ‘... students without learning difficulties had gone down from 95% to 85% ...’ the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2009 be regarded as correct and signed by the Committee Chair.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Item 6, Health and Safety

Following the Clerk to the Corporation’s conversation with Royston Hollyer, It was resolved **THAT**:

The appointment of Royston Hollyer as Corporation Health and Safety Champion be recommended to the Corporation.

4.2 Item 8, Communications Policy

The Committee considered the draft Communications Policy and Impact Measures that had been up-dated since the last meeting and gave a good base line on which to work. It was noted that some target timescales were short; however, the Director of Learner Services assured the Committee that statistics could be obtained quickly. The Committee looked forward to seeing the results of the analysis when completed.

It was resolved **THAT**:

- a) The Communications Policy and Impact Measures be approved by the Committee;
- b) The Communication Impact Measures be brought to a future meeting of the Committee when available.

5. HR STATISTICS

The new format headline Human Resource Statistics and the monthly HR report to the College Executive were considered by the Committee, which liked the new comparison statistics.

When discussing absences, it was reported that the College used the Bradford Factor in monitoring sickness absences and explained the College’s procedure involving the absentee’s Line Manager.

In reply to a query as to whether the Stress Survey correlated with the absence reports, it was reported that the Bradford Factor gave an early indication of likely problems.

Ratios between Teaching and Business Support Staff were difficult to assess as various factors had to be taken into account with posts such as Instructors and Assessors and some courses running for 52 weeks per year.

It was resolved **THAT:**

- a) The separate reporting of Academic and Support Staff statistics required further remodelling work to facilitate the Committee's request;
- b) The headline Human Resource Statistics, having been reviewed, identified no major cause for concern;
- c) The monthly HR report to the College Executive be received.

6. SALARY NEGOTIATIONS

Following AoC's annual salary negotiation with the recognised sector Trade Unions and recommendations being put to colleges, the majority of Unions agreed 1.5% for 2009/10 payable from 1 August 2009. UCU balloted its members for industrial action for a higher claim but members were not in favour of this and UCU had now joined the other Unions in agreeing the recommendations.

The number of College staff who were members of a union was queried. The figure was unknown but it was thought that numbers had risen over the past year.

The College had yet to determine whether or not it could accept the recommended 1.5% as it was subject to affordability and this might not be known until the end of the current academic year.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The College position remained unchanged.

7. LOCAL RECOGNITION AND PROCEDURAL AGREEMENT

The AoC recently agreed, with the National Unions for the sector, revisions to the 1993 Local Recognition and Procedural Agreement to recommend to colleges. The recommendation had been reviewed by the College Executive and discussed with the Unions, following which a few minor amendments were made to reflect the local position and both parties were in agreement with the content.

In reply to a query, it was reported that the College had a good working relationship with both unions and held regular joint meetings with them and members of the College Executive.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Local Recognition and Procedural Agreement be agreed for Stratford-upon-Avon College.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME REGULATIONS

The recent changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations require action on behalf of the College. The Committee found Appendix F most helpful in explaining the changes and comparing Warwickshire County Council's policy with that of the College's.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Committee approve revisions to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations as set out in Appendix F.

9. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Certain policies and procedures were in the process of being reviewed with the Unions to take account of changes in legislation and local working practices and these would shortly be presented to the Committee for agreement where they represented a local agreement.

It was resolved **THAT:**

The Committee note that discussions were on-going with the Trade Unions in relation to policies on: Adoption Leave; Code of Conduct; Dignity at Work; Disciplinary Procedure; Guidance for the Employment of Fixed-term Employees; Grievance Procedure; Maternity Leave; Parental Leave; Paternity Leave; Race Equality; Religion or Belief Equality; Settling-in Allowance; Sexual Orientation; Sickness Leave.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Deputy Director of Learner Services joined the meeting for this agenda item and went through the Equality and Diversity Report which gave a brief update, breakdown of current student community, revised EDIMs (Equality and Diversity Impact Measures), Ofsted requirements within the Common Inspection Framework and plans for future developments. As the previous EDIMs had been in place for several years, the report now required up-dating and would now be reviewed annually.

The College had taken up three half-days of free LSIS consultancy on Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding which had proved most helpful. The consultant noted that all EDIMs related to learners and recommended some HR specific EDIMs.

It was noted that there were many target dates to be met, a number of which were imminent, and the Committee was assured that arrangements had been put in place to meet these deliberately tight deadlines. Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding were important factors in Ofsted Inspections. There was much work to be carried out, including training of all staff, so that inclusivity could be seen all around the College and this was progressing well.

The Deputy Director, Learner Services offered to send information to Governors on the One World Celebrations taking place at Stratford-upon-Avon and Rugby campuses on 1-12 March 2010, to which Governors were very welcome to attend.

Feed-back was very positive on the Two Ticks for Disability review and the College had now been re-accredited.

The six years comparison data was discussed in depth by the Committee. It was noted that some learning difficulties were not known or provided on the data received from schools and only picked up when starting at College. The Director of Learner Services would press schools for better information in future and the Principal wished to see a zero in this section in the next report.

It was resolved **THAT**:

The report was well received but the Committee requested that a progress report on EDIMs be made to the next Committee meeting in July.

11. MARKETING REPORT

The Director of Learner Services went through the College Marketing Report and highlighted aspects, including:

- The many current and planned events being organised by Marketing;
- Marketing material now being produced in-house wherever possible;
- New plans to cope with increased numbers of prospective students attending College Open events and advertising on local buses had proved beneficial;
- Student Newsletter was sent to all prospective students - it was agreed that this would also be sent to Governors for information;
- Progress on keeping the College website fresh, Twitter, Face Book and Apps were discussed. These would be useful tools to obtain alumni information. Caution was given over data protection issues and discussed the various issues with the Committee.

It was resolved **THAT**:

- a) The report be received;
- b) The Student Newsletter in future be sent to all Governors for information.

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY TERMLY REPORT

The Health and Safety Termly Report for the Autumn Term 2009 was considered by the Committee. It was noted that one incident had been notified to the Health and Safety Executive which involved an assault by an uninvited stranger going onto the Rugby Campus site.

It was resolved **THAT**:

Having reviewed the report, the Committee considered there were no matters to pursue.

13. STRESS SURVEY

The Committee considered the up-dated Action Plan that showed the action taken or proposed to date arising from the College's Spring 2009 Stress Survey. Many training events had taken place, including communication, management, leadership, appraisal, and new line management, and positive responses had been received. College Senior Management would be attending a Friday and Saturday training event in mid-March.

In answer to a query, it was not possible to split the Stress Survey statistics between Academic and Business Support Staff as names did not have to be shown. The Committee noted that telephone counselling was available to all staff.

It was resolved **THAT:**

- a) The report be noted; and
- b) A further survey be undertaken in May 2010, the results of which will be provided to the Committee.

14. IDENTIFICATION OF REPORTS TO FUTURE MEETINGS

As agreed at the Corporation meeting in December 2005, each Corporation Committee is requested to identify any specific reports for future meetings.

It was resolved **THAT:**

As indicated in item 10, a report on EDIMs be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was resolved **THAT:**

The General Purposes Committee meet again on **Monday 12 July 2010** at 8.30am.