



**VISION WEST NOTTS
CORPORATION BOARD**

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Thursday 15 September 2011 at 5.00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
 Kate Allsop
 Howard Baggaley
 Tim Clarke
 Nigel Cooper-Fowkes
 Nevil Croston
 Diana Gillespy
 Jean Hardy, Chair
 John Holford
 Asha Khemka, Principal and Chief Executive
 Philip Lancashire
 Mike McNamara
 David Overton
 James Stafford
 Brian Stopford

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:
 Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
 Andrew Martin, Deputy Principal Director of Finance
 Tom Stevens, Executive Director: Capital Projects & Estates
 Patricia Harman, Deputy Principal: Teaching & Learning
 Tracy Thompson, Director: HR
 Louise Knott, Director: Marketing & Communications
 Graham Howe, Vice Principal: Business Development

11.71 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Standing declarations of interest were noted. Also for this meeting, particular interests were noted by Howard Baggaley in relation to the confidential item dealing with contractor selection for the long list of phase 2b of the new build project. It was agreed that this item would be discussed on a confidential basis and that Howard Baggaley would leave the meeting before discussions ensued.

11.72 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Terry Dean, John Robinson and Chris Winterton. The Clerk to the Corporation confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

11.73 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2011

As a point of accuracy, the Clerk was asked to note that Louise Knott had been in attendance at that meeting. Except for this point, members were

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

happy to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2011 as a correct record, and these were signed by the Chair.

ACTION by whom	DATE by when
Chair	15.9.11
Principal	Nov 2011

11.74 ACTIONS OUTSTANDING & MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chair raised one point as a matter arising and this related to the use of the new 'Vision West Notts' branding. She asked that the Board and the Management Team give some thought to how the logo and branding is being used to portray the College corporately. She indicated that as West Nottinghamshire College Corporation has not disappeared, there is a need to ensure that the corporate identity is retained on stationery. It was agreed that there is a need to ensure that the legal entity was retained and displayed and that a strategic message needs to still be evident that West Nottinghamshire College is still the statutory body responsible for the College. Governors all agreed that there needs to be clarity that 'Vision West Notts' is a brand and that there has not been a formal name change to the organisation.

The detail of the Action Progress Report was noted.

11.75 E-GOVERNANCE TRAINING

The Director of IT provided a thirty-minute training session on the new E-Governance provision utilised through google docs. Members were advised that the Remuneration Committee at its meeting last week, had trialled the system and that for this meeting, a dual system was in operation where Governors had received documents both in a paper format and through the IT solution proposed for paperless meetings. Members received the training and acknowledged that there may be ongoing training requirements. One point raised in relation to the format of papers available on google docs, was the need to remove the covering letter from the agenda at the beginning of the meeting. It was felt that while this was of use in paper format, it simply added to the time taken to find the actual agenda on the IT system.

11.76 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal introduced this item and drew members' attention to the detailed content of her report. The following was also brought to members' attention:

- Enrolment is progressing well and the College has now closed the gap seen in relation to the full time target. At this point in time, the College is only 20 – 30 enrolments short of the full time target.
- Results published over the Summer are very good and in some areas the best that the College has ever seen. It was confirmed that a full report on success rate data will be presented to the Board in due course.
- The formal opening of the CREATE facilities, hopefully with a Royal representative, will take place on the morning of 14 November 2011.
- Smoking Policy – so far the introduction of the complete no-smoking policy seems to be going well, the Executive Team are keeping a watchful eye on this, but to date there has not been the significant management challenges envisaged.

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

- The Summer restructure process has gone well. An initial 36 posts were identified as 'at risk'. Of these, 19 have left the College by way of voluntary severance, 5 have been re-employed in College, and 25 have stayed in post. The challenge for the Executive Team is now to re-motivate staff and this has already started. The Principal confirmed that there appeared to be a real 'buzz' about the College and in the vast majority of cases staff are very pragmatic and are simply getting 'on with the job'.
- College Finances - the anticipated surplus in the budget was £1.25million, the actual is £2.643million. A significant achievement for the College, particularly as there are some clear signs that there is improvement in the College's core operations. The College has moved to an operating surplus of 5.62%. This is an incredibly pleasing position as includes some unforeseen expenditure in the year, eg, ceiling tile replacement, restructuring. The Principal confirmed that without the actual extra/unforeseen costs of over £1million, the College's operating surplus and profitability percentage would have been much higher.

In terms of key areas to focus on for the 2011/12 year, the Principal drew the following to members' attention:

- Employer Responsive Provision. This area has a £20million budget in 2011/12, a significant proportion of which is off site provision. Historically the College saw a dip in 16-18 year old success rates when off site provision was initially introduced in relation to Train to Gain and this is again evident in relation to apprentices. The College must focus very sharply on the quality of partner provision.
- The College's overall success rates are showing a 'dipping' trend and this is partly in line with off site employer responsive issues, but has to be addressed to ensure the College's reputation is maintained and recruitment is strong.
- Key focus for 2011/12 for Governors to monitor is quality and success rates. The Principal confirmed that the Deputy Principal's report to the Standards Committee will always show the overall position of the College.

Members questioned whether the dip in the success rates arose because of one or many issues. The Principal indicated that there were many issues, but some were more significant than other, examples given were student drop out, but there is evidence that they are still working, or alternatively they have been made redundant. It was agreed that, at the next meeting, particularly in relation to Apprenticeships and the Employer Responsive Provision, a more detailed report on trends would be given by Graham Howe, the Vice Principal: Business Development.

It was noted that when the College's Train to Gain provision had grown significantly, the College had seen a dip but that this has now been reversed. What the College needs to do in relation to apprentices, is try and prevent the dip from occurring and this needs a real concerted effort and focus.

One additional matter raised was the framework for OFSTED inspection of 16-18 provision. The Principal confirmed that the students' experience at schools and college is very different and it is therefore hard to see how OFSTED are able to measure comparable success effectively. It has been the feeling in the FE Sector for a long time that there has been no level playing field and the College is to participate in the OFSTED consultation process to ensure that its concerns are fully noted.

ACTION by whom	DATE by when
Graham Howe	13.10.11

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

ACTION by whom	DATE by when
EDCP&E	8.12.11

AGREED: to note the content of the Principal's report.

11.77 PROPERTY STRATEGY UPDATE

The Executive Director: Capital Projects & Estates introduced this item and confirmed the following:

- The new Music, Media & Performing Arts Centre, CREATE, opened for business on 2 September with the main performance area used for the Principal's briefing session to all staff.
- The building contractor Bowmer & Kirkland increased staffing levels to complete the installation of additional roof installation as reported to the Corporation Board on 14 July 2011. Unforeseen delays have been incurred with the delivery and installation of external red and grey cladding. This matter is under consideration to rectify satisfactorily for the College. It was confirmed that some of the panels received had had to be replaced because of quality issues, and that because a significant amount of additional cladding is planned to be used throughout the rest of the development, there is a need to make sure that these quality issues do not arise again.
- Overall, the project cost is within the budget of £4.8million agreed by the Corporation Board on 16 September 2010.
- The planning application for the new sports hall and car parks was approved at the meeting at Mansfield District Council Planning Committee on 31 August 2011. Tender documentation has been issued and received in relation to selection of the building contractors for construction of the sports hall and car parks. This is a confidential item to be discussed at the end of the meeting.
- The planning application for the new build has been submitted and a 13 week consultation period will mean that the application may be considered at the MDC Planning Committee on 21 November, or more likely the 19 December meeting. The planning application will include the proposed enclosed courtyard. It was confirmed that a report would be presented to the Board meeting on 8 December including new-build contractor appointment recommendations. It was suggested that every attempt would be made to get the detail to the 24 November 2011 meeting, but that realistically this timescales may be too tight.
- The Derby Road three storey roof has been replaced and scaffolding completely removed.
- Ceiling tiles in staff rooms and all associated areas in the six storey tower have now been replaced and this completes the programme of work with the exception of the two reception areas.

AGREED: to note the Property Strategy Update provided.

11.78 FINANCIAL REPORT 2010/11 END OF YEAR POSITION

The Director of Finance introduced this item and drew members' attention to section 2 of his report which details the key points to note. The following was brought to members' attention:

- The result for the College is likely to be much better than had been anticipated, with an operating surplus of £1.52million on total income of £45.8million. This is around £931k ahead of forecast operating surplus and £385k ahead of the full forecast for turnover.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

- There are a number of reasons for the better than expected result for the College, and these include:
 - a) Income in the final month of the year was £513k better than expected, mainly due to an acceleration in adult apprenticeships, which surged to £3.47million for the full year (£2.53million forecast),
 - b) Train to Gain income advanced by £239k in the final month to deliver a higher income level than forecast,
 - c) ESF NEET programmes which closed at the end of the financial year have given a better return by some £93k,
 - d) Pay costs delivering a full year under spend against forecast of £378k which have been building throughout the year,
 - e) Full year savings on utility costs of £104k compared to forecast resulting from the change in energy supply contract.

- These favourable variances were offset by previously reported additional costs, which include total expenditure on maintenance of £1.105million in year, bringing some £171k ahead of forecast (but previously reported to the Board).
- The Group Companies have all performed better than had been both budgeted and forecast for the financial year.
- Skilldrive had expected to exceed forecast and had previously been reported through to the Board, but a strong final month of the year saw operating profits increase to £888k, well above the forecast of £711k and much stronger than the prior year position of £646k.
- Safety Plus has endured a challenging year which, although has seen revenues increase to over £2million, operating profits have remained at modest levels with the return of £230k for 2010/11. This does, however, compare favourably to the previous year where a return of £139k was achieved.
- Vision Apprentices has returned a small operating profit of £3k for the year, in line with expectations for the Company with some more encouraging signs of expansion in the core employer apprentice cohort.
- After a strong year financially, the College and Group balance sheets have maintained strength as at 31 July 2011. A significant change to the balance sheet is the impact of the change in FRS15 accounting policy, which has restated asset values at historic rather than re-valued amounts. He reminded members that this implementation had resulted in a drop in asset value because the College is no longer revaluing and that this is a more usual accounting treatment in the Sector.
- The cash values for the Group as at end of July were £7.17million, after fixed asset additions of £3.9million. As at the balance sheet date, not all of the fixed asset additions had been paid for and were carried as a creditor.

The Director of Finance confirmed that the College had put in a good and strong performance and that this placed them in a sound position for continuing developments. He indicated that the College had not yet tendered for the borrowing facility identified as needed for phase 2 developments as it is was not necessary to establish it yet. He estimated that the College's own financial position would enable it to reach February or March 2012 and potentially complete the Sports Hall development before borrowing was required. He indicated that there was no intention to

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

arrange the overdraft facility and put it in place before it was needed, as the College would incur non-utilisation costs. Members debated the lead in time for establishment of the borrowing facility. The Director of Finance indicated that he was thinking of a three month period for the process, during which the College would issue the tender documents, go out to the market, select and then arrange the facility. One Member of the Board present with a banking background indicated that the Executive Team would need to be quite careful in this area as, in his view, given the current state of the banking sector, there may be a need to allow more time than was originally envisaged. The Director of Finance confirmed that he would take this advice on board.

AGREED: to note the Finance Report 2010/11 end of year position.

11.79 INTERIM COLLEGE ENROLMENT REPORT 2011/12

The Deputy Principal introduced this report and drew members` attention to the written detail, she was able to provide updated information and the following was noted:

- 16-18 full time learners is now 98% of target. She confirmed that the College is just 50 pupils short of planned enrolment.
- 19+ full time enrolment stands at 97%, with another 27 students required.
- Higher Education – the College has seen 200 new full time enrolments with 6 more in the pipeline, this will mean that the College meets its 206 target. She reminded Governors that the College has to be very careful in this area as will be penalised should go over the 206 target.
- Members` attention was drawn to the breakdown of enrolments at section 3. It was agreed by all that this was a very healthy recruitment position, particularly following the withdrawal of EMA and the expected reductions anticipated.

AGREED: to note the Interim Enrolment Report for 2011/12.

11.80 EMPLOYER RESPONSIVE AND WORK BASED LEARNING PROGRAMME UPDATE – AUGUST 2011

The Director of Finance introduced this item and drew members` attention to paragraph 7 which provides full year performance:

- Train to Gain will see end of year performance at £5.579million.
- Work based learning 16-18 will see 2010/11 year end performance of £7.269million (this is a good performance albeit it is short of the £8.5million target).
- Work Based Learning adults will end the year at £3.443million, this is against a target of £2.533million.
- Apprentices continue to be a challenge and a focus for the College in the 2011/12 academic year.

The Director of Finance then drew members` attention to the schedule of contracts with partners detailed (page 45 of the papers). Members reviewed appendices a) and b) and were happy to approve the contractor appointments identified. Members also noted the paragraph 11 data, which explains proposed contractor activity.

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

AGREED to:

- a) Note the content of the Employer Responsive and Work Based Learning update, and
- b) Approve the Partner Commitment Proposals provided for 2011/12.

11.81 EXCEPTION REPORT – SAFEGUARDING, EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The Director Communications & Marketing introduced this report and confirmed that in relation to Equality & Diversity, there have been no reported incidents throughout the summer. She asked members to note that action throughout the summer to attract disengaged young people back into College and apprenticeships had been very successful. Also, anecdotally, the efforts to attract non-traditional students into certain curriculum areas, seems to have paid dividends (most notably women into Engineering and Construction). She indicated that over the summer the College had introduced a summer job shop initiative, with 59 young people engaged, of these, 20 had obtained apprenticeship employment.

She confirmed that there had been no safeguarding incidents reported during the summer period.

AGREED: to note the Exception Report – Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity.

11.82 SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

The Director: Communications & Marketing introduced this item and confirmed that the College had seen a very good year in relation to safeguarding arrangements. She confirmed that all action plan activities had been completed and that for the 2011/12 year there were three areas for development:

1. Safeguarding arrangements in relation to partner provision – because of the increased use of partners, the College needs to ensure that there is consistent, robust and a quality approach to safeguarding.
2. E-Safety/Cyber Bullying needs to be addressed with greater awareness.
3. Student responsibility for there own actions needs to be more clearly developed.

She confirmed that the College has seen a greater use of student lanyards at the beginning of 2011/12 and that this is in contrast to the resistance seen at the beginning of the 2010/11 academic year.

Members discussed CRB checks undertaken by partners. It was acknowledged that, as the College is legally responsible as employers for apprenticeship work and placements with employers, there is a need to ensure that all partners' staff have CRB checks completed and that the College has the systems in place to ensure that this is done. Members were assured that regular returns are provided to the College and it is a specific contract term with partners that if they do not comply with CRB requirements, then the College will terminate the contract.

It was explained that the College obtains evidence from partners by way of what is called a 'single record' to ensure these obligations are met.

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
	AGREED: to note the Safeguarding Annual Report 2010/11.		
11.83	<u>MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 JULY 2011</u>		
	AGREED: to note the content of the minutes.		
11.84	<u>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</u>		
	It was agreed that confidential items would be discussed at the end of the meeting and recorded separately.		
11.85	<u>AOB</u>		
	Members took this opportunity to provide some feedback on how they felt the meeting had operated without papers, the following was commented:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The document numbering on the IT system is not helpful and should align more fully with agenda item numbering. The Clerk explained that this had been identified as a potential area for improvement, but that the system would not allow you to do this. • Some Governors like paper and like being able to annotate. • Some members of the Board would like to use I-Pads. • There ought to be the option for individuals to opt out of meetings on an IT basis. The Principal confirmed that this was available to all Governors and that if, at the end of the term, there was more than 50% of Governors who wished to go back to paper or opt out of using the IT system, then the College would revert back to a paper system. • Financial tables are difficult to navigate. • Hard to make copies and highlight – Gavin Peake confirmed that he would provide specific training for Diana Gilhespy. • Are we confident that the content of the information is confidential within google? • The operation of the meeting involved everyone looking at PCs and the information provided rather than the presenter, this may eventually be perceived as a block to discussion. • In the absence of I-Pads, there was a feeling that the College was trialling a system, but only half trialling it, because this is not how the meetings would operate if I-Pads were available. • Portability is an issue. • Take a little while to embed. 		
	In general terms it was felt that the Board should continue to use E-Governance for a term and would then review at the December Board meeting.	All	8.12.11
11.86	<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u>		
	The Clerk to the Corporation reminded the Board that the next meeting was scheduled for 13 October 2011 at 5.00 pm.		
	Staff and Student Governors (plus Howard Baggaley) left the meeting at 5.55 pm.		

Signed : _____ Chair

Date: