

Brooke House Sixth Form College

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held at the Islington Hilton Hotel on 31 January 2009 at 1400 hrs.

Present	Melissa Abraham	Olivier Bogaerts	Sade Bright
	Vivien Cutler	Richard Garrick (Chair)	Sid Hughes
	Fjolla Isufaj	Jeremy Jennings	Lioka Mabika
	Yvonne Mwiza	Ken Warman (Principal)	Janek Whitaker
In Attendance	Taiwo Adeshina (Finance Director)	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Philip Elliot (VP(T&L))
	Calista Francis (VP (Students))	Jonathan Stewart (DP)	
Apologies	Bob Herring	Lisa Huggins-Chan	Ken Spours
	Simon Thomsett		

The Chairman welcomed Melissa Abraham to the meeting and thanked her for volunteering to become a member of the Corporation.

24/08 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND APOLOGIES

- a. The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate.
- b. Richard Garrick had declared an interest F&GP Minute 1/07b which remained extant for all corporation and committee meetings.

25/08 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS (Inc Committee meetings)

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2008 were confirmed and signed.
- b. The Audit Committee. (04.12.08). The minutes were noted.
- c. The F&GP Committee. (04.12.08). The minutes were noted.
- d. The Search Committee. (04.12.08). The Committee had recommended that Melissa Abraham be appointed to the corporation, the recommendation was accepted and she was appointed for 3 years.
 - a. **The Corporation minutes were confirmed and signed.**
 - b. **The Committee minutes were noted.**
 - c. **Melissa Abraham was appointed as a Corporation Member.**

26/08 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- a. re Principals Report. (13/08d) The IQR planned for January had now been completed. One area had been removed from the special measures and whilst progress was being made with maths, ICT continued to be poor. The Standards Committee would consider this in particular at their next meeting.
- b. There was no urgent business agreed.

27/08 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- a. Negotiations with the LSC regarding student number for 2009/10 were currently underway. The LSC funding formula was inflexible and motivated against the

present situation and could result in a 15/20% reduction in income. It was suggested that a reduction in allocated student numbers with some flexibility of funding for any recruitment above the allocation would be the optimum solution but it was accepted that it may not be feasible. However recent success in performance may well influence the necessary considerations. Achievement and Standards data for greater London were then circulated and it was noted with pleasure that the table position had moved from 21st in 2008/09 to 9th; this clearly indicated the progress that had been made with provision. The results were the best in Hackney, had outstripped the City and Islington College and the points per entry clearly indicated true progress. These factors could reduce the number of students that chose to go out of Borough and enhance recruitment. Current indicators tended to indicate growing local popularity and the Learning Trust and the LSC were actively seeking to provide support and to reinforce success. These successes may influence consideration and help with approval for the necessary exceptional funding, discussed above, to fund the optimum solution however that approval was not in the gift of the LLSC and national office agreement would be required. It was agreed that the progress was outstanding and represented a welcome return for the hard work and commitment by the staff and students and evidenced the validity of the recent managerial strategy. The Corporation recorded appreciation for these achievements and the hard work and professionalism that lay behind them.

b. Finance. (Finance Director) Accounts accurate to 31 November were considered, the figures still contained some residual journals from the AFS. The deficit was showing as -£69k against the planned deficit of -£74k and the YTD was -£133k against -£170k with the year end position now expected was a deficit of -£572k. Staffing costs were well under control with a saving of £47k, and excepting attributable overspends in 4 areas, in particular the agreed additional marketing allocation, that was also true for non-pay expenditure. The cash flow did not include the favourable WYG settlement figure of c£1m. Concern was expressed that the overspend forecast continued and it was agreed that a significant movement in the figures was necessary if viability was to be achieved. Inclusion of the WYG settlement funding would considerably improve the position but it could be eroded by the overspend. A draft budgetary recovery plan had been considered by the F&GP Committee at the end of last year and it had been clear that full recovery would need to be based on 5 years rather than 3. It was clear that close monitoring was necessary and work would continue on the recovery plan.

The Information was noted and received.

28/08 MID YEAR QUALITY REVIEW

Sound progress was being made with the mid-year quality review which would be completed by half term to allow consideration by the Standards Committee prior to scrutiny the Corporation.

The Information was received.

29/08 SELF APPRAISAL

a. Summary details of the recent self-evaluation had been circulated earlier. The scoring matrix had been arranged on a scale of 5, with 5 being the high in preference to the 4 point scale more commonly used; the purpose had been to allow more detailed analysis of borderline areas but in the event the lowest score was statistically insignificant (and invalidated by comments) and had been discounted. This allowed assessments to be made along more conventional lines, excellent, good, satisfactory and inadequate. Study of the tabulated information had shown variations between individual scorings and those moderated by the peer groups, which clearly were the appropriate data to be used for analysis. All averages had been rounded up to a single percentage and the overwhelming assessment was "Good" with a strong tendency towards "Excellent". This had been a rigorous exercise which had been well moderated and should be considered as valid and showed solid achievement along the path to "Excellent". There had been clear indications of a corporate entity, a common purpose and an acknowledgement that the appropriately skilled member took primacy when the situation required it.

Progress had been steady and sustained over the last 12 months and thanks were recorded for effort and support.

- b. Individual comments revealed that a significant proportion felt that:
 - (i) they prepared properly for meetings;
 - (ii) they were unsure/unfamiliar with the college core business;
 - (iii) they were unsure of the machinery of governance and the role of the different categories of members;
 - (iv) they were unsure of the role of those "in attendance";
 - (v) they were unfamiliar with and therefore unsure of financial implications;
 - (vi) team working was very strong with a solid sense of shared objectives;
 - (vii) insufficient time was given to student voice;
 - (viii) committees should be assessed as well as the corporation;
 - (ix) all acted as ambassadors of the college.

- b. Action.
 - (i) as a matter for personal attention it was commendable that the great majority of members but perhaps are fully prepared for meetings;
 - (ii) 20 minute briefings in advance of corporation meetings was a common model to widen knowledge, alignment with curriculum areas could be achieved by formal pairing but to avoid partiality and parochialism it may be that regular informal sessions (maybe lunch?) between SMT/Staff and corporation members and possibly the clerk, to facilitate free ranging conversations followed by group visits to wider college areas may be a better option. In this model individual members would be "focussed" to a curriculum area and rotated each year. Members were asked to comment on these ideas. Calls on time of management were accepted.
 - (iii/iv) the Clerk would provide informal training sessions for those members who feel that they would benefit;
 - (v) the Finance Director could run some informal training sessions for those members who feel that they would benefit, however it was accepted that this could have been overstated as a problem since a well qualified F&GP Committee completed detailed study of the data;
 - (vi) nothing required, this had been a positive;
 - (vii) the papers for each agenda item would include as the final comment student voice input, either from outside the corporation or from members. This should be clearly shown on the minutes as having been completed;
 - (viii) Committees would be self assessed at the last meeting of each academic year and reported to the corporation at the first to inform appointment of members to committees;
 - (x) nothing required, this had been a positive;

The Information was received and actions approved.

30/08 WYG UPDATE

The WYG Issues process was now approaching conclusion; costs were currently being assessed, WYG had paid £700k on account against a claim of £981k and the consent order was now being administered. The agreement included a confidentiality clause and it was recorded that strict compliance by the corporation and staff was necessary to avoid any chance of default.

31/08 URGENT BUSINESS

There had been no urgent business agreed.

32/08 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be at 1800 on 30 April 2008.