

## Further Education Corporation

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### Approved Minutes

*Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 6 October 2008 at 6.10 pm.*

Present: Mr P Pickford (Chairman)  
Mr M Baker  
Mr J Bruce  
Mr Y Goolamali  
Dr R Gray  
Mrs J Hodges  
Ms R Klass  
Mr R Lane (from Item 2)  
Mr D O'Halloran  
Mr M Smith  
Mr P Stafford

In Attendance: Professor N South (University of Essex – Observer)  
Mr J Hayles (Director of Quality Improvement) (Item 9)  
Mr R I Millea (Clerk to the Corporation)

#### 1. Appointment of new Student Member

On the recommendation of the Clerk acting on behalf of the Search Committee, the Board passed the following motion:

##### **MOTION**

That Mr Richard Lane be appointed to the Corporation as a Student Member with effect from 6 October 2008 until 31 July 2009, subject to him remaining a student of the College.

Mr Lane then joined the meeting.

#### 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Carr, Ms C Piper and Mr L Privett.

Mr Buggle was absent.

Ms K Stevenson (Student Member) was not present – see item 11 below.

### **3. Urgent Business**

#### **(a) Enrolment Update**

The Principal and Chief Executive reported that approximately 350 additional 16-18 year olds SLN's (Standard Learner Numbers) for this year had been recorded so far and the target of 150 additional to last year has been comfortably exceeded. Exact numbers will be known by the time of the next meeting of the Board. Adult enrolments are difficult to determine at this stage. HE enrolments are not as good at this stage as hoped, but there is still time for that position to recover somewhat.

#### **(b) Insurance arrangements**

The Board received a report on the College's insurance arrangements which are with AIG Group, in the light of that company's difficulties in the US. In particular, the Board noted that the College's insurer is AIG UK Limited, which is ring fenced from the effects of the US position, is a separate legal entity and is required to maintain solvency levels set by the UK Regulator and the Government.

The Board noted the position and the need to keep it under review in the light of volatile market conditions.

### **4. Minutes of the Meeting of Monday 7 July 2008**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 7 July 2008 were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chairman, subject to adding Mrs J Hodges as an attendee.

### **5. Matters Arising**

#### **5.1 Academy Proposal**

The Principal and Chief Executive reported in connection with a possible Academy Proposal in Thurrock.

The Board deemed this to be a confidential matter under the Instrument & Articles and a separate minute has been prepared and is attached to these minutes.

#### **5.2 OfSTED Inspection**

The Clerk reported that a copy of the OfSTED inspection report had been sent to all members of the Board.

#### **5.3 College Budget 2008-09**

The Clerk reported that there are still some unconfirmed elements of LSC funding in connection with 2008-09 but these are not expected to materially alter the Draft Budget approved by the Board at their last meeting. The College is operating in accordance with this Budget.

The Board noted the position.

## 5.4 Clerkship Services

The Board noted that, in accordance with the authority given by them at item 16.1 of the minutes of the previous meeting, Chaplin Frobisher Welling Limited had been re-appointed as providers of the Clerking Service to the Corporation.

## 6. Audit Matters (Paper FEC.08.28)

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Board

- (a) **APPROVED** the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2007-08
- (b) **APPROVED** the Internal Audit Strategy 2008-11 and the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2008-09.

The Chairman of the audit Committee (David O'Halloran) also informed the meeting that, should the merger proceed, it would be the intention to retender for internal audit services (and external audit services) post merger.

The Chairman also reported that Scrutton Bland, our internal audit service provider, are also the external auditors of Thurrock & Basildon College and the same partner is responsible for both assignments. At the request of the Audit Committee, he has now removed himself from his position as engagement partner on the internal audit work for this College. It has been further confirmed that no members of that firm's staff work on both Colleges.

## 7. Strategic Developments in South Essex (Paper FEC.08.29)

The Principal and Chief Executive provided a verbal update in connection with the proposed merger of this College with Thurrock & Basildon College. This update is deemed a confidential matter under the Instrument & Articles and a separate minute has been prepared and attached to these minutes.

In connection with the proposed merger, the Board **APPROVED** the following resolutions:

### **MOTION 1**

That the Board approves the adoption of the Composition and Terms of Reference document for the Joint Merger Steering Group, which is attached.

### **MOTION 2**

That the Board approves the appointment of Jan Hodges as Principal and Chief Executive designate of the proposed merged institution.

### **MOTION 3**

That the Board approves the adoption of the Initial Outline Proposal for the merger of South East Essex College and Thurrock & Basildon College for submission to LSC Essex and the LSC Regional Council for consideration by them on 8 October.

## **MOTION 4**

That the Board approves the appointment of Bentley Jennison as due diligence accountants for the merger process to act on behalf of the College in reviewing the accounts and related matters, including legal issues, of Thurrock & Basildon College for a fee of £45,000 plus VAT.

(Note: John Bruce and Yusuf Goolamali, both Board members of Southend Hospital, informed the Board that Bentley Jennison are the internal auditors of the Hospital).

The Board, otherwise, **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the Merger Update Report.

The Principal and Chief Executive then provided the Board with an outline plan for the production of the College's new Strategic Plan/Merger Plan for 2009-12, explaining that it is intended to merge the strategic aspirations for the possible merger into the process of production of the plan.

After discussion, this was **RECEIVED** and **AGREED**.

The Principal and Chief Executive gave a verbal update in connection with the LSC Competitions in Thurrock and Basildon. This covered marketing and recruitment plans for the interim build in Thurrock, where SEEC is the lead partner.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

### **8. Management Matters (Paper FEC.08.30)**

The Board **RECEIVED** diagrams of the revised management structures, now reflecting the Faculty model.

The Board then **APPROVED** the following motion:

#### **MOTION**

That Carol Anson-Higgs (Director of Business Development) and Wendy Barnes (Director of FE) be designated as 'holders of senior posts' with effect from 7 October 2008 as per Articles 1 and 3(e) of the Articles of Government.

### **9. Quality Matters (Paper FEC.08.31)**

#### **9.1. NOVA and Train to Gain Consortia Pathfinder OfSTED inspection**

The Director of Quality Improvement provided a written report on the above inspection, which took place from 15-23 September 2008. The inspection was very successful with all grades being two, except for one grade three. Inspectors noted a number of outstanding features. John noted it was a Pathfinder inspection, i.e. a new style of inspection. Inspectors were impressed with the dramatic increase in numbers in both consortia. They noted the rapid progress in raising achievement levels in NOVA.

The Board **NOTED**, with pleasure, the report and the successful outcome of this inspection.

## **9.2 Key Performance Indicators**

The Board **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** the College's performance against the Key Performance Indicators identified in the College Strategic Plan, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, as it was a tabled paper.

John referred to the positive messages which were being shown by the report as to retention, attendance and lesson observations. Unfortunately, the learner satisfaction indicators, whilst good, were not as high as last year. The importance of this indicator was emphasized, given that the quality of the learner experience is a vital part of Framework for Excellence.

## **9.3 Learner Performance**

The Board **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the preliminary report of Learner Performance, 2007-08, noting that an earlier version had already been considered by the Policy & Resources Committee. The key highlights are included in the PowerPoint presentation, which is attached to the agenda papers for this meeting. Members noted the strong performance of the College's students again this year.

## **10. Principal and Chief Executive's Report (Paper FEC.08.32)**

The Principal and Chief Executive's Report was **NOTED**.

## **11. Membership Matters (Paper FEC.08.33)**

Members **RECEIVED** the revised Register of Corporation Members and Members' Personal Information Booklet.

Members **ACCEPTED**, with regret, the resignation from the Board of Ms Kamesha Stevenson, HE Student Member. The Clerk informed the Board that the HE Student Council is meeting in the week commencing 20 October and it is intended that a candidate will be nominated by them for appointment to the Board. It is hoped that that person could be appointed at the next meeting of the Board in December.

## **12. Reports from Committees (Paper FEC.08.34)**

The Board **RECEIVED** reports on the meetings of the Policy & Resources Committee and the Audit Committee which have taken place since the last full Board meeting.

The Board also received reports on meetings of the Joint Merger Steering Group as confidential items.

**13. Forthcoming Events (Paper FEC.08.35)**

The Board received a note of forthcoming events including the Board Development Day to be held on 17 November 2008.

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 1 December 2008 at 6.00 pm

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.15 pm.