

Lewisham College

Governing Body

18 March 2009

Child Protection training has been scheduled at 5.30pm – 6.30pm prior to the start of the Governing Body meeting

Formal Business

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declaration of Interest**
Members of the Governing Body and members of staff with significant financial responsibility are invited to declare the nature and extend of their financial or other interest in any business to be discussed at this meeting
- 3. Unconfirmed minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 3 December 2008**
- 4. Matters Arising**
- 5. Principal's Update (including 'reasons to be cheerful')**
Oral report
FOR INFORMATION
- 6. *Areas of Stewardship**
Report attached
FOR INFORMATION
- 7. *Dates of Meetings in Autumn Term 2009**
Report attached
FOR APPROVAL

Strategy, Students and Curriculum

- 8. Success rates for 2007/08 and strategy to May 2010 including Self Assessment Update**
Report attached
FOR INFORMATION
- 9. Half Yearly Incident Reports**
Report attached
FOR INFORMATION
- 10. Curriculum Review and Planning for 09/10**
Report to be tabled
FOR INFORMATION

11. Fees Policy for 09/10

Report attached
FOR DECISION

12. Deptford Redevelopment

Report attached
FOR INFORMATION

Finance and Audit

13. Performance and Funding Update

Report attached
FOR INFORMATION

14. Management Accounts

Report attached
FOR INFORMATION

15. Amendments to Financial Regulations

Report attached
FOR DECISION

16. Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors – Assessment of Performance and Re-appointment for 2008/09

Report attached
FOR DECISION

Governance

17. Unconfirmed Minutes of Committee Meetings

- A. Confirmed Minutes of Quality Committee held on 25 November 2008
- B. Unconfirmed Minutes of Remuneration Committee meeting held on 3 December 2008 (**CONFIDENTIAL**)
- C. Confirmed Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 3 December 2008
- D. Confirmed Minutes of Finance and Estates Committee held on 6 January 2009
- E. Confirmed Notes of the Selection Panel held on 9 February 2009 Confirmation of Chair's Action.
- F. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 10 February 2009
- G. Unconfirmed Notes of the Student Forum held on 11 February 2009

H. Unconfirmed Minutes of Academic Council held on 25 February 2009

Oral Report from:

- Quality Committee -24 February 2009
- Finance and Estates - 3 March 2009
- Selection Panel - 6 March 2009
- Audit Committee - 10 March 2009

Other

18. Any other business

19. Future agenda items

20. Dates of next meeting

Strategy Day – 9 May 2009

Governing Body – 20 May 2009

Governing Body – 8 July 2009

Lewisham College

Minutes of a Meeting of the Governing Body held on 18 March 2009

Present:

John Sunderland (Chair)
Monica Duncan (to item 13)
Nicci Emanu (to item 10)
Asquith Gibbes (Emeritus)
Robert Massey
Marlene Oates-Hinds
Jerry Robinson (to item 10)
Christine Rose
Mel Saunders
Ruth Silver
Fola Thomas
Judith Williams
Juliet Williams-Siley

In Attendance:

Dith Banbury (to end of item 9)
Mark Cook
Simone Davies
Lyn Gadd
Liz Geary
Stephen Lawes
Nick Linford
Peter Mayhew-Smith
Tim Potter

Also in attendance:

Jane Stroud (Acting Clerk)
Beatrice Pelling (Governance Secretary)

Child Protection Training

Before the formal meeting, Governors received training on Safeguarding and Child Protection presented by Dith Banbury, Vice Principal Learning and Community Development.

The aims of the refresher session were to:

- refresh Governors' awareness of the legal framework and the College's and Governors' responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection
- bring Governors up-to-date with developments in safeguarding and child protection

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Douglas Hands, John Curry, Mike Fahey (Emeritus), Steve Hoquee, Ken Langley (Emeritus) and Frances Sweeney.

Apologies had been received from the two student governors and the Vice Principal Learning and Community Development for leaving the meeting early.

In the absence of Frances Sweeney who was on sick leave Jane Stroud was **APPOINTED** as Acting Clerk.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were none

3. Minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 3 December 2008

The minutes were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED**.

4. Matters Arising

Item 8 The Audit Committee Annual Report to the Governing Body had referred to an Audit Committee meeting on 20 November. This had been postponed and had taken place on 3 December. The report would be amended to reflect this and the Chair of the Audit Committee be asked to sign it again.

Item 21 A message would be sent to staff via the College intranet regarding progress with the recruitment for the new Principal.

5. Principal's Update

An **ORAL** report was **RECEIVED** from the Principal.

Students

- All Student Union vacancies had been filled
- The College hosted the National Diploma Roadshow on 5 March designed to encourage Year 9 and Year 11 students to enrol on Diploma courses
- Dance students from the College performed at Sadler's Wells on 12 and 13 March
- 400 people attended Taster Day in January

Staff

- Staff meetings have been arranged to discuss the Ofsted Inspection
- Launch of the Succeed Strategy - the various activities planned included Easter revision sessions
- A Teaching and Learning showcase had been scheduled for 3 April designed to celebrate the work carried out by teachers and support staff in promoting student success
- Investors in people re-evaluation taking place 16-24 March

Strategy

- Met with representatives at City Hall, lead team London Borough of Greenwich in connection with the Deptford redevelopment.

- College nursery achieved the 'I Can, Early Talk accreditation standards' with a grading of almost 100%. The only nursery in Lewisham to have this.

6. Areas of Stewardship

Report **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**

7. Dates of Meetings in Autumn Term 2009

A report was **RECEIVED** from the Governance Secretary recommending a schedule of meetings be produced three times a year, providing a rolling year of meetings.

The Governing Body **AGREED** the **RECOMMENDATION** to a change in procedures and agreed the schedule of meetings for autumn 2009.

9. Half Yearly Incidents Report 2008/09

A report was **RECEIVED** from the Vice Principal Learner and Community Development on incidents reported by Duty Principals in the first half of the academic year 2008/09. There had been a small reduction in incidents, an increased number of suspensions and reduced number of exclusions, reflecting decisive action taken at an early stage.

The following points were made in **DISCUSSION**:

1. Students were normally suspended for no more than 5 days. During this period an investigation and/or disciplinary hearing would be conducted.
2. Police are called for major incidents only. On arrival officers are expected to report directly to the Principal's office.
3. The Vice Principal undertook to carry out an investigation into why incidents appeared to involve a disproportionate number of black students. It might be simply that this reflected the profile of the 16 – 19 cohort.
4. The data showed an increase of incidents at the Deptford Campus. Members were concerned at the impact this might be having on 14 – 16 learners' experience of the College. Members commented that an increase in the number of female students in construction might help. One of the student governors said she had observed a number of incidents involving sports students and suggested introducing a red / yellow card system to deal with bad behaviour. The Principal confirmed that the new Head of Sport had been given additional support to deal with learner behaviour.
5. It was suggested that learner behaviour should be a subject for discussion at the Student Forum.

8. Success rates for 2007/08 and strategy and Self Assessment update

Members **RECEIVED** a presentation from the Deputy Principal which set the context for both items 8 and 10, and then the report on success rates for 2007/08. The performance of the College needed to be understood against

the changing cohort of students, due to the availability of alternative sixth form provision in the Borough and continuing emphasis on widening participation. At the invitation of the College OFSTED had carried out the pilot of a new inspection process in January which identified a deterioration in success rates in 2007/08. As a result the College had rigorously re-examined its grade profile and self assessment grades, and swiftly produced a plan to optimise learner success in the remaining months of the academic year. The delivery structure for the following year would be strengthened by the recruitment of two new curriculum directors and by changes to the course file.

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality tabled a self assessment update for the College, to be confidential until it was submitted to OFSTED during a scheduled desk review exercise the following week. The College's grade profile required some updating as success rates for long courses had fallen below the national benchmarks with level 1 representing a sharp decline, although the College still remained in the top 5% nationally for contextual value added. Three areas were revised down one grade each: Achievement and Standards, Health & Care, and Electrical Installation.

The following points were made in **DISCUSSION**:

1. The Principal requested that governors focus even more on the curriculum, and signalled that the College needed to work with the Borough to keep education funds in Lewisham. With the new government structures there was also an opportunity for Lewisham to negotiate for a share of regional funds. Of the current budget, approximately £12.5m will come through the Borough.
2. The Chair of the Quality Committee confirmed that the whole of the most recent committee meeting had been devoted to success rates, in particular the two curriculum areas where self assessment grades had been reduced. Governors could add value by questioning data.

It was **AGREED** that a standing item on quality improvement be placed on the agenda for each Governing Body meeting.

10. Curriculum Review and Planning for 09/10.

The report was **TABLED** by the Deputy Principal on the proposed changes to the College's curriculum offer and management structures for 2009/10. It was tabled because it had been necessary to keep it confidential until all the managers concerned had been briefed. Consultations would now take place with staff and the professional associations affected by the proposed changes.

The following points were made in **DISCUSSION**:

1. The Executive Director, Business Development explained three responses to the recession; supporting businesses to be sustainable, supporting individual skills for jobs and employability, and supporting 'people in the middle', those at risk or under notice of redundancy. An example of the latter was the bespoke work being carried out for Tate & Lyle.

2. College partnerships were key, especially with Job Centre Plus, the local authority and the Lewisham Strategic Partnership.
3. There was a concern that young people were taking on apprenticeships but would then find it hard to find jobs.
4. It was confirmed that it was now possible for unemployed people to take immediate advantage of provision at the College.
5. The Deputy Principal confirmed that Basic Skills would be slimmed down to make it stronger, and stated that the College would support the Borough's emphasis on the STEM agenda by offering 'new' engineering.
6. At the moment the prospects for Train to Gain funding were good, but money could run out.

Governors **NOTED** the report and supported its direction.

11. Fees Policy for 2009/10

A report was **RECEIVED** from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services setting out proposed changes in fees and charges for the 2009/10 academic year. Proposals were based on an increase of 12.5%, slightly less than the LSC assumed fee increase of 13%, as this would still leave the College rate at slightly above the Assumed Fee Income of 47.5%. The College was improving its instalment plan for learners, and many learners benefitted from fee remission.

The Fees Policy for 2009/10 was **AGREED**.

12. Deptford Redevelopment

A report was **RECEIVED** from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, together with a **TABLED** report outlining most recent national developments and how they impacted upon the College. The written report, previously reviewed by the Finance and Estates Committee, set out how well the project was going. Due to a suspension in funding at national level the project was now being steered into 'dry dock'. If the project did not re-start the College was facing a potential write-off of £5m which would lead to much tighter budgets in future. The College was engaged in extensive lobbying for funding. Following the Finance and Estates Committee meeting John Curry had been leading on the lobbying on Governors' behalf. The College was also continuing to talk to and advise the LSC.

The following points were made in **DISCUSSION**:

1. The Vice Principal, Redevelopment and Facilities was commended on the way she had led the Deptford redevelopment project to date. Until this point, a great deal of work had been carried out on design, and with town planners.
2. Governors asked to be informed how they could further support the College's efforts to re-start the project going again.

The report was **NOTED** and the general direction endorsed.

13. Performance and Funding Update

The report, previously reviewed by the Finance and Estates Committee was **RECEIVED** from the Director of Planning and Performance.

The report was **NOTED**.

14. Management Accounts

A report was **RECEIVED** from the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the management accounts for six months to 31 January 2009. The main points were as follows:

1. Cash balances were forecast to fall in March because of project costs. As a result the College was expected to borrow to meet costs.
2. Any under spend on staff costs will be used as additional funding for the Success strategy.

The Accounts were **NOTED**.

15. Amendments to Financial Regulations

A report was **RECEIVED** proposing amendments to the College Financial Regulations on authority limits.

The changes were **APPROVED**.

16. Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors – Assessment of Performance and Re-appointment for 2008/09

The report, previously considered by the Audit Committee, was **RECEIVED** from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services. The Committee had been pleased with Buzzacott's work.

It was **AGREED** to appoint Buzzacott as Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors for 2008/09, as recommended by the Audit Committee.

17a Minutes of the Quality meeting held 25 November 2008

The minutes were **NOTED**. They had been reported upon orally at the previous meeting.

17b Minutes of Remuneration Committee held on 18 December

CHAIR'S ACTION had been used, as approved in advance at the December meeting of the Governing Body, in order to agree the outcome of the meeting on behalf of the Governing Body.

17c Minutes of the Audit Committee held 3 December 2008

The minutes were **NOTED**. They had been reported upon orally at the previous meeting.

17d Minutes of the Finance and Estates held 6 January 2009

The minutes were **NOTED**

17e Notes of the Selection Panel held 9 February 2009

The notes were **RECEIVED** from the Chair of the Selection Panel.

At the request of the Succession Strategy Group **CHAIR'S ACTIONS** had been used to add John Curry, Monica Duncan and Christine Rose to the Group, and to convert it into the Governors Selection Panel for a new Principal. The Chair's Actions were endorsed.

17f Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held 10 February 2009

The minutes were **NOTED**

17g Notes of the Student Forum held 11 February 2009

The Minutes were **RECEIVED** from the Chair of the Student Forum who commented that a large number of students attending the meeting. Feedback from the student discussion had been positive and any actions would be fed back to the relevant areas of the College.

The minutes were **NOTED**

17h Minutes of the Academic Council held 25 February 2009

The minutes were **NOTED**.

17i Quality Committee held 24 February 2009

An **ORAL** report was **RECEIVED** from the Chair of the Committee that the success rate strategy had been discussed in great detail. **NOTED**

17j Finance and Estates held 3 March 2009

An **ORAL** report was **RECEIVED** from the Chair of the Committee who commented that the significant items had been discussed earlier in the meeting. **NOTED**

17k Search and Governance held 11 March 2009

An **ORAL** report was **RECEIVED** from Christine Rose, member of the Committee, who **TABLED** governor applications from Kate English and John Litchfield, and the Governors Self Assessment Report and resulting Action Plan.

The Committee had considered applications from Kate English and John Litchfield, and both had met with members of the Committee and completed appointment procedures required. On the recommendation of the Committee Kate English and John Litchfield were **APPOINTED** as members of the Governing Body for a four year period of office, to be confirmed after one year as per the standing orders. In addition Kate English was **APPOINTED** to the Quality Committee and Student Forum, and John Litchfield was **APPOINTED** to the Audit Committee.

The Committee had reviewed the Self Assessment Report produced following an exercise carried out by the Governing Body. There was a concern by the Committee that perhaps the grade should be reviewed in the light of success rate issues discussed earlier in the meeting. It was **AGREED** that the Governing Body Self Assessment Report be discussed further at the Strategy Day, 9 May.

17I Audit Committee 10 March 2009

This would be reported on at the next meeting.

18. Any other business

19. Future agenda items

Demographics, Skills and Unemployment statistics for Lewisham or South East London over 2-3 years

20. Dates of next meeting

Strategy Day	-	9 May 2009
Governing Body	-	20 May 2009
Governing Body	-	8 July 2009

The meeting ended at 8.30pm