

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body
24th March 2011

Present: Mrs L James (in the chair)
Mr B Davies
Mr J Dewar
Mrs M Lippard
Mr P Cooper
Mr J Cuthbert AM
Mr I Tompkins
Mr W J Hunt
Ms L Hill
Mr W H Coleman - in attendance
Mr PH Martin – in attendance
Mr D Finch - in attendance
Mrs J Siddle – in attendance

Apologies: Mrs G Genner, Ms J Hare, Mr R Gough, Mr H Haines, Mr D Hardacre,
Mr D Collins.

Welcome to New Learner Governor

The Governing Body welcomed Ms Louise Hill as the newly elected Learner Governor.

Training Session by Suzi Moore, Service Manager, The Diversity Project, Barnardo's Caerphilly Services

Suzi Moore, Service Manager for the Diversity Project, Barnardo's Caerphilly Services presented details of the aims of the project which is to raise awareness, promote inclusivity and provide advice and support to young people and professionals. Ms Moore outlined details of the duties placed on employers under The Equality Act 2010 together with the measures designed to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The Governing Body expressed their thanks and appreciation to Ms Moore for the informative training session and suggested that Joan Siddle Vice Principal (Student Services/Student Support) organise appropriate training sessions for learners on the issue of equality and diversity.

Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 16th December 2010

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 16th December 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Proposed Strategic Alliance with Coleg Gwent

The Committee noted that the Principal, Liz James Chair of Governors and Phil Cooper are to attend a meeting with WAG officials on 29th March 2011 to discuss the decision

made by the Governing Body that the merger proposal with Coleg Gwent was not an appropriate way forward for the benefit of the learners in this College at this time.

Caerphilly County Borough Council's Proposals under Transformation

The Principal informed the Committee that a meeting has been arranged with the local authority and that any outcomes will be reported back to the next Governing Body meeting.

Past, Present and Future

The Principal to update the Governing Body at its next meeting on the progress of the promotional material highlighting the journey taken by the College over the past 17 years.

Minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee Meeting held on 20th January 2011

The minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting held on 20th January 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Quinquennial Review – Motor Vehicle

David Finch, Deputy Principal (Academic) informed the Committee of the significant progress made in the area of Motor Vehicle curriculum development since its introduction into Rhymney in 2005/2006.

Progress Update on the Development of the College's Welsh Language Scheme

Members noted that the draft College Welsh Language Scheme has been submitted to the Welsh Language Board and that to date no response has been received from the Welsh Language Board.

Paper on Modifications to the Observation of Lessons within PMAR

The Committee noted the modifications to the observations of lessons within PMAR which it was felt would provide a more robust PMAR process.

Curriculum Enrichment Policy Statement prepared by David Finch, Deputy Principal (Academic)

Members were informed that the Academic Board had fully endorsed the Curriculum Enrichment Policy Statement.

Internal Inspection Report on Sport, Leisure and Tourism

The Committee noted that a grade profile on outcomes indicated a grade profile of good for full time courses and adequate for part time provision, giving a grade profile of good overall.

Members noted that the standard of teaching and learning had been awarded a grade profile of good. The Committee were informed that in many classes (81%) of teaching and learning are at or above good and in three instances excellent, with 95% of classes at or above the quality threshold.

Update on Thematic Inspections/Quality Probes

Members were informed that the use of quality probes to investigate issues/concerns/good practice is to be extended across all programmes following the successful completion of this process with Technology and General Education.

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 7th March 2011

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7th March 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Visit to China

The Governing Body noted that the Principal had recently visited the Chongqing region of China as part of an event organised by the British Council aimed at raising Wales' profile. This had been agreed with the Chair as the request for his attendance had come after the previous meeting of the Governing Body.

VAT

Members endorsed the decision taken by the Finance and General Purposes Committee that Deloitte be appointed as the College VAT consultants.

Strategic Alliance with Coleg Gwent

The Governing Body in consideration of the WAG report on the Welsh FE Sector Headline Financial Position 2009/2010, concluded that the report strengthened the previous decision it had taken at its meeting on 16th December 2010 that a merger with Coleg Gwent was not an appropriate way forward for the benefit of learners in this College. Members determined that the financial position of Coleg Gwent posed an inherent risk to the learners and finances of Ystrad Mynach College should the College merge with Coleg Gwent. The Committee felt that the risk would be even greater if it was determined that Coleg Gwent take over the running of Ystrad Mynach College as part of a Type B merger.

Educational Character of the College as expressed in the College Mission Statement

The Principal presented the report on the educational character of the College which was designed to reflect the Governors' views of local and national needs. Following lengthy discussions the Governing Body, having considered the underlying themes of the developments which had taken place at the College over recent years, including future developments, formally endorsed the College Mission Statement and approved that the educational character met the requirements of the strategic plan.

Half Year Financial Report of the Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning) (1st August 2010 to 31st January 2011)

The Governing Body considered in detail the Half Yearly Summary Information Report presented by Paul Martin, Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning) for the period 1st August 2010 to 31st January 2011.

Members noted the comments of the Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning) which included reasons for any major variances on income, pay and non pay expenditure

In addition the Committee noted details of the summary balance sheet up to 31st January 2011.

WAG Report on the Welsh FE Sector Headline Financial Position (2009/2010)

The Committee noted the Welsh Assembly Government Report on the Welsh FE Sector Headline Financial Position 2009/2010 as presented by Paul Martin, Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning).

Report of the Director of Information Services on Student Retention

Paul Martin, Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning) presented the report on student enrolment/retention data for the period September 2008 to March 2011. Members noted that the total numbers of full time student enrolments had increased compared to the same period last year and that the percentage rate of withdrawals remained the same level as 2009/2010 (10%).

Verbal Report of the Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning) on the CEU Performance to date

Paul Martin, Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning) presented a verbal report on the CEU performance to date. The Committee were informed that whilst at present the College was a number of credit equivalence units short of its target this shortfall was expected to be reached before the end of the academic year.

College Risk Register (2011/2012)

Members considered in detail the College Risk Register (2011/2012) prepared by Paul Martin, Deputy Principal (Finance/Planning). Following discussions the Committee approved the Register as presented.

Annual Governors Dinner

Members noted that the Annual Governors Dinner will be held on Thursday 19th May 2011.

Date and Time of Next Governing Body Meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Governing Body is to be held on Thursday 14th July 2011 at 4.00pm.

Any Other Business

Statement Regarding the Exclusion of a Learner, Sara Watters

The Principal presented a statement regarding the exclusion of a learner, Sara Watters. Members were informed that should they be contacted by the father of the learner, Mr Watters, or any other interested party on this issue, then they refer the individual(s) to the College's Solicitors, Morgan Cole for the attention of Gemma Bailey.

Independent Review of the Governance Arrangements of Further Education Institutions in Wales

The Principal outlined details of the main proposals arising from the independent review of the governance arrangements of FE Institutions in Wales. It was noted that the Welsh Assembly Government is arranging a number of regional road show events to ascertain opinion on the proposals. A further discussion on this issue will take place at the next Governing Body meeting.

Hairdressing/Fashion ESDGC Event

Members were extended an invitation to attend a hairdressing/fashion event on Thursday 14th April 2011 at 6.30pm to celebrate the theme of Environmental Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

Equality and Diversity/Healthy Living Event

The Chair and Governing Body expressed their thanks and appreciation to those staff and students involved in the very successful Equality and Diversity/Healthy Living Event at the College on 16th March 2011.

Corporate Health Standards – Bronze Award

The Chair and Governing Body offered their congratulations to those staff involved in the achievement of the Bronze Award as part of the Corporate Health Standards.

Healthy College Wales

The Principal informed the Governing Body that the College had successfully achieved the Student Health and Well Being unit as part of working towards the Healthy College Wales standards.

Colegau Cymru Award – Innovation in ILT

Members were informed that the College is shortlisted for the innovation in ILT category as part of the Colegau Cymru Awards.

Withdrawal from Meeting

Mr J Cuthbert withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the Any Other Business items.