

**BRIGHTON HOVE & SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES HELD ON  
THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008  
HELD IN ROOM 151, COLLEGE HOUSE**

PRESENT: Peter Freeman (Chairman), Howard Kidd, Richard Schaverien.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Thomson, Anne Fielding Smith and Louise Pennington.

The meeting was quorate

**CC.08.01 Apologies and Welcomes**

Apologies were received from Dominic Blythe, Yvonne Hillier and Marion Wilcock.

**CC.08.02 Minutes of the Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

**CC.08.03 Matters Arising**

Referring to item CH07/07 Making BHASVIC Outstanding (MBO) regarding the production of a vital statistics sheet for Governors, LEP agreed to raise the item at SMT in order to move this forward. **ACTION: LEP**

**CC.08.04 Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference were reviewed by the Committee and it was resolved to recommend them unchanged to Corporation for approval. **(ACTION LEP)**

**CC.08.05 Governing Body Self-Assessment**

**a) Framework for Excellence (Financial Management and Control Evaluation)  
Annex A**

The Committee was advised that the FMCE was part of the Government initiative, Framework for Excellence, comprising a series of performance indicators which the Government requires all Colleges to complete and be judged upon. The aim is that all stakeholders will be able to see at a glance, key information about their providers, together with associated grades. In completing the document consideration has been given to the last Ofsted inspection findings (Autumn Term 2007) and the associated PFA (Provider Financial Assurance) Audit.

Area 1 Accountability comprising sections 1.1 Strategic Oversight, 1.2 Operational Oversight and 1.3 Subcontracting Arrangements (not applicable to BHASVIC).

1.1 Strategic Oversight: Self-Assessment Grade: Outstanding.

## 1.2 Operational Oversight: Self-Assessment Grade: Good.

Peter Freeman reported upon his telephone conversation with Yvonne Hillier immediately prior to the Committee meeting, who had queried the second strength entry (page 14 of the document, page 20 of the papers), identified within this section, relating to question 1.2.4. but which has not been classified as an outstanding strength. Although CT explained that the financial controls and processes were robust and therefore a strength, this did not necessary equate to resulting in an outstanding judgement being given. A discussion was held and following a suggestion by Howard Kidd that in this instance it might be a little misleading, a qualification should be included within the “strength” explanatory note to explain the reasoning behind the “no” response to the “outstanding – yes/no? column. **ACTION: JHK.** The Committee recorded that the grading options and the structure of some of the report were a little misleading particularly within the financial questions where in standard internal audit reports the accepted grading is based upon “inadequate”, “incomplete”, “appropriate”, and “comprehensive” with the optimum audit result, being “appropriate”. It was also recognized that it was very difficult to have a financial controls in place achieving an “outstanding” category owing to the nature of financial management, where adequacy is the level to which providers aim and where this meets the expectations of the auditors.

1.3 – not applicable.

Area 2 Financial Planning comprising sections 2.1 Long-term Financial Planning, 2.2 Short-term Financial Planning

### 2.1 Long-term Financial Planning: Self-Assessment Grade: Good

It was noted that the strength identified relating to question reference number 2.1.3 was deemed not to be outstanding and a discussion was held again similar to that relating to question 1.2.4 within Area 1 section 1.2. However in this instance it was agreed that a further qualification within the strength identified was not appropriate.

### 2.2 Short-term Financial Planning: Self-Assessment Grade: Outstanding

Similarly to question 1.2.4 and 2.1.3 above, the first strength identified to question reference number 2.2.2 namely, “The annual budget is without fail approved in advance of the year to which it relates” was thought to be a strength but not one which was “outstanding” as it is something which the College believes that all Colleges should be doing, although not all Colleges will do this.

Area 3 Internal Control comprising Sections 3.1 Risk Management, 3.2 Internal Control System.

### 3.1 Risk Management: Self-Assessment Grade: Outstanding

### 3.2 Internal Control System: Self-Assessment Grade: Outstanding

Area 4 Financial Monitoring comprising Section 4.1 Financial Monitoring.

### Section 4.1 Financial Monitoring: Self-Assessment Grade: Good

It was noted that question 4.1.6 “Is the earned income within the management accounts reconciled to the underlying learner performance data monthly” had been given a “No” answer and that in fact this should be “N/A” owing to the fact that the College has primarily 16-18 LSC funding, so no need for adjustment for “earned” income in the year. **ACTION: JHK.**

It was resolved that subject to the above recommended changes, the Chairs' Committee endorsed the entries given within the document and the consequent grades allocated.

A further discussion was held regarding question 4.1.1. "Is a defined suite of financial reports produced on a timely basis each month that enable governors, the principal and managers to exercise their financial responsibilities?" and Howard Kidd suggested that this area should be developed further e.g. key indicators for financial targets etc. In this regard the Committee agreed that Howard Kidd agreed to investigate the matter and identify appropriate criteria.

**ACTION: HK**

#### **b) Instrument and Articles – responsibilities of Governors**

LEP presented the paper to the Committee the contents of which were noted.

#### **c) Governor Self-Assessment (SAR)**

The responses to the questions within the report were considered by the Committee and the document was recommended for approval, subject to the following amendments:

Item a) Add statement about Ofsted's comments regarding Leadership and Management as follows:

"The last Ofsted Inspection which was completed in December 2007 classified the College's Leadership and Management as "outstanding" – Grade 1 and also stated that Governance at the College was also "outstanding".

Item b) "division managers" to be replaced with "Heads of Faculty".

Item c) "2 Assistant Principals" to be replaced with "Vice-Principal and Assistant Principal".

e) To update the response as follows:

"Within the College's budgetary constraints the Corporation aims to ensure the adequacy of resources to meet Learners' needs. Through the Premises Group (which reports to the Finance & General Purposes Committee), membership of which has been strengthened for this purpose, Governors have worked closely with staff to obtain planning permission and LSC approval. Revised planning permission was granted in 2008 and it is intended that the Application in Detail will be submitted to the LSC during early 2009 for a £43M re-building programme. This recognizes the inadequacy of the current accommodation. In 2006 Governors and staff worked together to implement a £1,000,000 DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) building project. Prior to this in 2001, the College's Sports Hall development was achieved successfully."

f) "will cease to be financial health category A" to be replaced with "will not return to financial health category A".

**ACTION: LEP**

#### **d) Committee Self-Assessment**

LEP presented the paper to the Committee and it was resolved to introduce the proposed Committee Self-Assessment process, subject to Corporation approval, during the Summer Term next year. It was noted that each Committee would complete a self-assessment exercise based on the questions given within the paper, combined with a review of its terms of reference. The latter is an annual requirement, which Committees usually complete in the Autumn Term. The results of the Committees' self-assessment would then feed into the

Autumn Term Chairs' Committee and also Autumn Term Search Committee (skills audit analysis/attendance analysis and review of membership/succession planning exercises). CT and AFS supported the proposals suggesting that it would significantly strengthen governance at the College.

The paper was recommended to Corporation for approval. **ACTION: LEP**

#### **e) Individual Governor Self-Assessment**

The Committee discussed the proposed individual Governor Self-Assessment form and it was resolved to recommend to Corporation that this be approved and implemented with effect from the Summer Term 2009 as d) above (subject to one amendment Question 9 "and" should be "or"). LEP explained that it was proposed that the responses within the completed documents would be used for both self-assessment purposes and to assist the Chairs' and Search Committees with identifying Governor training needs, skills audit analysis and succession planning, combined with resolving any issues or problems identified by individual Governors.

**ACTION: LEP**

#### **CC.08.06 Strategic Planning Away Day**

The Governors' Away Day planned for 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 at City College, was discussed and it was resolved that Jo Lyons (Director of Lifelong Learning) should be invited to talk about the forthcoming educational changes affecting Further Education in Brighton and Hove and the issues effecting both East and West Sussex. **ACTION: CT/LEP**

CT reported upon the process for producing the next strategic plan, explaining that initially SMT would meet to discuss strategy issues for the next three years; a summary of these discussions would be brought to the December 2008 Corporation Meeting. Once Governors are happy to proceed with the proposals, a staff consultation process would commence in the New Year (Management Away Day and Whole Staff Away Morning); a refined draft document would be brought back to the Summer Term Q & C Committee and then to Corporation for approval. Governors would also consider the draft proposals at its Strategic Planning Away Day.

#### **CC.08.07 Governor Training**

The Committee noted the various training schedules, including pre-corporation meeting training, other courses attended, links visits and inductions.

A discussion was held regarding the disappointing attendance level on links visits and it was resolved that AFS/LEP should discuss various links visit options and offer these to Governors. This will assist Governors in providing further guidance and also ease the organization of the links visits. **ACTION: AFS/LEP**

#### **CC.08.08 Review of Job Descriptions for Principal and Clerk**

##### **PRINCIPAL**

The revised document was approved and recommended to Corporation, subject to the following change:

Item 1. b) delete "the determination of its".

CLERK

The revised document was approved and recommended to Corporation, subject to the following change:

Item 8. page 70 – delete “(unless prevented by illness)”.

It was also resolved to add the two standard clauses which were included in all College Job Descriptions – AFS to advise LEP accordingly. **ACTION: AFS/LEP**

**CC.08.09 Role Description – Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Role Descriptions were recommended to Corporation for approval.

**CC.08.10 Any Other Business**

Richard Schaverien queried whether the College had purchased insurance in respect of Governors’ liability and CT confirmed that a policy for £1M was in place. It was noted that to date no claim had ever been against a Governor within the FE Sector.

**CC.08.11 Date of Next Meeting**

To be arranged as necessary.

Louise Pennington  
Clerk to the Corporation

CHAIR.....DATE.....