

BRIGHTON HOVE & SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 17th OCTOBER 2007
HELD IN ROOM 151, COLLEGE HOUSE**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Thomson, Anne Fielding Smith (for item 6) and Louise Pennington.

The meeting was quorate

CH.07.01 Apologies and Welcomes

Apologies were received from Andrew Barnett and Marion Wilcock.

CH.07.02 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th November 2006

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

CH.07.03 Matters Arising

With regard to item 5.d), PF and CT agreed to discuss the changes at FE Sussex outside the meeting.

CH.07.04 Terms of Reference

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

CH.07.05 Governor Self-Assessment including SARQ

The two page Governor Self-Assessment summary sheet (Chairs' Committee 8th November 2006) was tabled as a reminder of the report submitted with the College's SAR in 2006.

The contents of the paper entitled Corporation and Governors' Self-Assessment Questions October 2007 were also noted by the Committee.

It was resolved that both of the above papers would be reviewed by the Committee during the meeting and that revisions would be made to last year's summary self-assessment sheet accordingly, taking into account the guidelines given in the governance good practice documentation. It was noted that the FE Sussex Self-Assessment Tool which has been used in previous years in conjunction with the SARQ would not be used this year and that the standards and questions recommended by governance good practice, would better suit the governance self-assessment process.

It was agreed that at next year's Chairs' Committee to review self-assessment, a paper summarizing the key responsibilities within the Instrument and Articles would be included within the papers **(ACTION LEP)**.

Amendments to the Self-Assessment summary sheet were agreed – refer to attached schedule.

The SARQ submitted to the PFA Audit Team was graded 2 (as recommended by SMT) in the College's assessment of the soundness and operation of its financial management and governance framework and the assessment of the effectiveness of its financial management and governance framework. The Chairs' Committee supported the grade allocated and recommended the completed SARQ and the grade assessments to Corporation (**ACTION LEP – include SARQ and 2 page summary sheet in Corporation meeting papers**).

The Committee also discussed the need for self-assessment of individual governors/committee members and consideration was given as to whether self-assessment should be at an individual, Committee or Corporation level. It was resolved to recommend to Corporation that the Corporation should review this annually at its summer term meeting and that in this regard, LEP should issue all Governors/Committee Members with a brief questionnaire at the beginning of the Summer Term to identify any particular concerns, issues or suggestions from Governors/ Committee Members. Feedback would also be requested from SMT to Governors. It was agreed that where personal issues are identified, then these would be dealt with by either the Chair of Corporation or the relevant Committee as appropriate. (**ACTION: LEP**).

CH.07.06 Inspection

AFS gave a briefing to the Committee and the following points were noted:

- a) "light touch" inspection, with 5 inspectors for 4.5 days. Lead Inspector is Ken Jones.
- b) A preliminary meeting has been held with Ken Jones, CT and AFS.
- c) A pre-inspection commentary has been issued by Ofsted, a 26 page document which includes details of all the evidence from the last inspection report, especially highlighting the College's weaknesses. It also includes the details from the last SAR and AAV (Annual Assessment Visit). A series of questions are given arising from the evidence and the College is working on responding to these questions during this week.
- d) There are 5 key questions from the CIF (Common Inspection Framework) which the inspection will concentrate upon. Each key question has been assigned to a senior member of staff to act as co-ordinator. Question 5 – Leadership and Management has been assigned to CT. Question 5 includes "governance". The Deputy Lead Inspector, Jo Packman (JP) and Chitra Robson (CR) (Shadow Inspector) will be investigating issues arising from Question 5.
- e) JP and CR will be meeting with a group of Governors on Wednesday 31st October 2007 at 6.30 p.m.
- f) All Governors/Committee Members have been provided with the latest version of the Q & C summary crib sheet (**ACTION AFS** - AFS agreed to check the details of this).
- g) Governors involved in the meeting with Inspectors have also been given a copy of the latest SARQ and AFS and CT (report on quality of management) would be providing more information during next week (include the text in the CIF Question 5). (**ACTION AFS/CT**).
- h) PF will be meeting with JP and CR on Monday 29th October and MW will be attending the feedback meeting on Friday 2nd November (at which SMT will also be in attendance). PF agreed to circulate some comments to the Governors involved in the 31st October meeting, after his meeting with Inspectors. (**ACTION PF**).

CH.07.07 Making BHASVIC Outstanding (MBO)

The Committee noted the contents of the document entitled "Discussion Points: What makes a College Outstanding" pages 9 -15 of the papers.

A discussion was held and the following comments made:

- a) CT thought that the Governing body attributes already made it effective and efficient, in particular its openness and willingness to review its function and effectiveness.
- b) It was noted that with regard to progress with the MBO, a series of soft and hard indicators had already been agreed with staff.
- c) It was agreed that a "vital statistics" sheet could be devised to expand upon Andrew Barnett's Q & C summary (crib) sheet, which could incorporate some of the key points raised in the document. It would also be useful for the College staff and governors to have access to the key indicators over a period of say the last 5 years, incorporated within the vital statistics analysis.

It was resolved that CT should present the Discussion Points paper to SMT for further thought on how best to devise a vital statistics sheet. **(ACTION CT)**

CH.07.08 Governor Training

The various training records were considered and reviewed by the Committee and it was agreed that although governor training was good, further effort was needed to encourage more governors to complete links visits. However it was acknowledged that many Governors were in full time employment and that there were time constraints. **(ACTION PF/LEP)**

RS pointed out that governor involvement in enrichment week was an excellent idea, but that the week selected (end of the summer term) was not a good time for many of the "working" governors.

It was also recorded that a schedule of events for the academic year was being prepared by DAM to highlight in advance, social events such as concerts, art exhibitions and theatrical productions to which Governors are encouraged to attend. **(ACTION LEP)**

With regard to students' interest in governance, it was noted that the College currently had two very active Student Governors – Sam Wolfe and Isobel Rogers and that through the Cross College Council students were fairly well-informed about various governance activities e.g. capital project and the student voice.

CH.07.09 Confidentiality – revised procedure

The revised procedure was approved and recommended to Corporation with the following addition: Fourth paragraph, second line – "Their continued confidentiality will be reviewed annually" – add "by the Clerk to the Corporation in consultation with SMT and recommendations made to Corporation accordingly". It was also agreed that the following should be added to this section – "Where there is reference to individual staff or students then these items should remain confidential". **(ACTION LEP)**

With regard to the confidential minutes of the Corporation and various Committees for the 2006/2007 academic year, the Committee considered the details and agreed that a recommendation should be made to Corporation based on the revised policy above. **(ACTION LEP)**

CH.07.10 Resolving Difficulties

The procedure was reviewed by the Committee, noting that a procedure was necessary to meet the requirements of the Financial Memorandum. It was agreed to recommend the procedure to Corporation, subject to reference being made in the heading of the procedure to the appropriate section of the Financial Memorandum. **(ACTION LEP).**

CH.07.11 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

CH.07.12 Date of Next Meeting

To be arranged as necessary.

Louise Pennington
Clerk to the Corporation

CHAIRMAN.....DATE.....