

THE SOUTH DOWNS COLLEGE CORPORATION

Minutes of meeting held at 5.45 pm on Thursday 8 November 2012 in the Committee Room

Present: Andrew Turner (Chairman), Tim Bennett, Ray Bolton, Ian Child, Graham Fice, Laxmi Neave, Peter Rhodes, Caroline Strevens, Lyn Surgeon (Principal), James Warner

Apologies: Stephenie Linham, Donna Munday, Tony Welch, Patricia Thompson.

In Attendance: John Manterfield (Deputy Principal and Clerk to the Corporation)
Chris Harpum, Vice Principal – Arts and Sciences
Liz Norland, Vice Principal – Business and Community
Pankaj Makwana (Director of CIS, IT and Finance)
Jake Foote (appointed student governor under Minute 988)
Susan Grantham (Minuting Secretary)

The Chair welcomed Chris Harpum, Liz Norland and Pankaj Makwana to the meeting. He also welcomed Jake Foote whose appointment as student governor would be ratified under Item 5 on the agenda, and outlined the format of the meeting.

987. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2012 were AGREED whereupon the Chair SIGNED the minutes.

988. Membership – Student Member

The Clerk noted that Jake Foote was in his third year at South Downs and in his second year of the BTEC Level 3 Diploma in ICT and the Student Union Student Engagement Officer.

The appointment of Jake Foote as student member, duly nominated and elected by the students of the College under Clause 2(1)(f) of the Instrument of Government, for a period of 2 years, or until he is no longer a student of the College, was AGREED.

989. Membership

The Chair reported that he had today received an email from Patricia Thompson and noted she had tendered her resignation with immediate effect due to her daughter's continued ill health. He requested that Patricia Thompson be written to on behalf of the Corporation to thank her formally for her significant contribution as a member of the Corporation and of the Audit, Search, and Staff Appeals Committees, and to send best wishes to her and her family.

The Clerk noted the resignation of Tony Welch with effect from 31 December 2012, and reminded members of the vacancy of Gwen Blackett (31 July 2012), leaving three vacancies.

990. Corporation Membership / Search Committee meeting scheduled for 5.15 pm.

The Clerk reported that the Search Committee scheduled for 5.15 pm on 8 November 2012 had not taken place as insufficient members were available to make the meeting quorate. He noted that previously the Corporation had advertised in the Portsmouth News for prospective members with a background in business or in the voluntary sector in areas matching the College curriculum. A Skills Audit had been carried out for the Search Committee and he noted the strengths of the current governing body and suggested it would be an opportunity to recruit more representation from employers and businesses, e.g. retail; hospitality and catering; health and care; engineering. The Clerk noted the College has cross-college links with major employers which it wished to develop and asked members to encourage contacts to apply for consideration by the Search Committee. The Principal encouraged members to approach suitable candidates known to them or advise the Clerk so that he can approach them direct.

On the proposal of the Chairman it was AGREED to place an advertisement along the lines discussed and for Members to advise the Clerk of suitable contacts and potential governors.

991. Membership – Committees

The Clerk reported that in addition to the vacancies outlined on the agenda, Patricia Thompson's resignation left vacancies on the Audit, Search, and Staff Appeals Committees.

- (i) Audit Committee – The Clerk noted that Peter Rhodes' appointment was due to expire and he had expressed a willingness to stand again. On the proposal of Caroline Strevens seconded by Graham Fice the appointment of Peter Rhodes as a member of the Audit Committee for a period of two years with effect from 10 November 2012 was AGREED.
- (ii) Staff Appeals Committee - The Clerk noted that two vacancies existed with immediate effect, including that of Chair, and one vacancy with effect from 31 December. Current membership comprised the Chairman, Stephenie Linham and Tony Welch; quoracy was three members.

On the proposal of Peter Rhodes, seconded by Laxmi Neave, the appointment of Caroline Strevens as both member and Chair, and the appointment of Ray Bolton as member, of the Staff Appeals Committee for a period of two years with effect from 8 November 2012 was AGREED.

One vacancy remains on the Staff Appeals Committee with effect from 1 January 2013.

- (iii) Audit Committee - The Clerk noted the two vacancies on the Audit Committee, one with immediate effect and one from 1 January 2013. Current membership comprised Donna Munday, Graham Fice and Peter Rhodes; quoracy was three members; the next meeting was on 22 November 2012 and he reminded members of the Finance and Employment Committee that there was a conflict of interest to serve on both Committees.

No expressions of interest were received and the Chairman proposed that the two vacancies be carried forward and offered to newly recruited governors in the new year.

- (iv) Search Committee – The Clerk noted the two vacancies on the Search Committee with immediate effect; current membership comprised the Principal, Chairman and Stephenie Linham; quoracy was three members. The Chairman volunteered that the Clerk should approach Donna Munday to serve on the Committee.

On the proposal of the Chair, seconded by Peter Rhodes, it was AGREED that the Clerk should approach Donna Munday to be appointed a member of the Search Committee for a period of two years with effect from 8 November 2012.

One further vacancy remains on the Search with immediate effect.

Governors wishing to express an interest in standing for any of the above vacancies, namely the Staff Appeals, Audit, Search Committees, were requested to contact the Clerk.

992. Remuneration Committee held on 27 September 2012
(Doc.C12/33 was circulated with the agenda)

The Chairman noted the remit of the Committee to determine the salaries of the two senior postholders of the College, namely the Principal and Deputy Principal.

The Minutes of the Remuneration Committee held on 27 September 2012 were RECEIVED.

993. Student Outcomes 2011/2012
(Document C12/34 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal was pleased to report that for 2011/12 overall all-age success rates (retention x achievement) had increased to 83.7% compared with 80.5% the previous year. This represented a significant increase and was testament to the tremendous hard work of staff to raise retention and achievement. In future the Corporation would receive the three-year trend for success rates. 19+ achievement was the focus for improvement, along with retention in this area, and detailed action plans were place. She noted the very successful luncheon earlier in the day attended by the Havant Federation of Schools' headteachers and some of their past pupils who are studying at South Downs and on track to achieve well at College.

[Ian Child arrived at 6.05 pm.]

The Vice Principals, Chris Harpum and Liz Norland, made presentations focussed on success rates and highlighted some key achievements, concerns and value-added and how improvements were being developed through individual curriculum action plans. Of particular note: the increase in success rates of 83.7% up from 80.5%; success rates 16-18 of 86.22%; retention 16-18 of 90.91%; 19+ has declined and the focus for improvement. A Level represented one third of provision with an A2 pass rate of 99.7% across 2089 entries; A*-B grades of 44%; 72 students achieved A*. AS subjects achieved 91.69% pass rate and 31.9% for A-B grades. Individual curriculum areas were reported including internal gradings for the recently completed individual Self-Assessment Reports and the presentations are attached to the minutes. Success rates were improving in all curriculum areas and the theme emerging was around 19+. GCSE English achievement was a concern and the curriculum area was being restructured with a new programme leader appointed for the 400 GCSE learners. Retention on Skills for Life courses had a detrimental effect on success rates mainly due to 3 year programmes which were now offered as one-year programmes to claim achievement for each year.

The curriculum area of Humanities of Modern Languages was being split into two curriculum areas - English and Modern Foreign Languages; and Humanities and Social Sciences. The Head of Sciences and Mathematics was leaving at the end of the term and the curriculum area of Sciences would remain in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences; Maths was moving to the faculty of Business and Community to become the new curriculum area of Maths, Computing and IT.

The Principal thanked Chris Harpum and Liz Norland for their presentations and invited questions from members. She commended staff for the hard work taking place bringing about real successes. The College was aiming for rising trends to take the College to an overall success rate of circa 90% in three years, to self-assess more curriculum areas as grade 1, as part of our mission to be Outstanding. Members commented positively on the action being taken and noted the issues concerning 19+ success rates in some areas.

Both Vice Principals said they would be pleased to respond or discuss any individual queries received from members by email.

- (i) The annual summary report for 2011/2012 was RECEIVED.
- (ii) The presentations from Chris Harpum and Liz Norland were RECEIVED and are attached to the minutes.

994. Senior Leadership Team
(Doc.12/35 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal noted that Senior Leadership Team organisation chart had been presented to governors at the Training Meeting on 27 September 2012 and Peter Mudd had since retired as Director of Information Services at the end of October. The College had taken the opportunity to make a saving in staff costs and the work of CIS and IT Services now rested with Pankaj Makwana as Director of CIS, IT and Finance; Richard Barlow, Director of Learning

and Quality had taken over responsibility for the Learning Resources Centre; Sarah Banach, Head of Resource Planning, now reported to the Deputy Principal.

The update was RECEIVED.

995. Strategic Plan 2012-2013
(Doc.C12/36 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal noted that she had discussed the details of the Strategic Plan with governors at the training meeting on 27 September 2012. The Corporation was now asked to approve the final document, which had been amended to take on board comments received and she offered to take any questions. In response to Graham Fice she confirmed performance indicators would be reviewed with the Corporation at the end of February.

On the proposal of the Chairman the Strategic Plan 2012/13 was unanimously APPROVED.

996. Cleaning Contract (CONFIDENTIAL ITEM)
(Doc.C12/37 was circulated with the agenda)

The Deputy Principal reminded members of the Confidential nature of this item under the statutory process for procurement in the sector. The present contract to MITIE was awarded in 2002 and they were re-appointed in 2007. Hampshire County Supplies had worked with the College to set up a specification and administer the tender process under OJEU procedures. There had been a review of requirements to reduce costs without impacting on the quality of cleaning – the expiring tender provided for more extensive cleaning in non-term time to cover the then greater number of adult part-time classes as well as more frequent cleaning of non-public areas (eg storage spaces). All tenderers were aware of the need to be cost-effective. Some 29 expressions of interest were received and a site visit arranged for all possible tenderers. The spreadsheet at Appendix 1 indicated the 15 tenders received and scored independently by both the Deputy Principal with the Premises Team and by Hampshire County Supplies. The three highest scoring contractors were invited to make a presentation to the College and County Supplies Business Services. The highest scoring contractor was Churchill Contract Services Ltd, along with Hayward Services Ltd and Regent Office Care Ltd. Churchill Contract Services Ltd really impressed as outlined in paragraph 6 particularly with regard to training, staff development, health and safety, and thoroughness; their area manager based in Cosham. The tender had come in at an annual saving of some £60,000 - £70,000, references had been taken up and the College was confident that Churchill can deliver the contract.

On the proposal of the Chairman it was AGREED unanimously that the tender dated 2 October 2012 from Churchill Contract Services Limited for the provision of cleaning services for three years from 1 January 2013 with possible further extension for two years in the sum of £215,098.04 +VAT (£258,118.25) for the first year be ACCEPTED.

997. Sub-Contracting for the delivery of EFA and SFA Funding Agency provision
(Doc.C12/38 was circulated with the agenda)

The Director of CIS, Information Services and Finance outlined the proposal for Partnership Delivery sub-contracting noting the shortfall in the 19+ funding income for 2011/12 of nearly £1 million and the current forecast for 2012/13 of some £900,000. 2012-13 would be the second year that the SFA target had not been achieved. He further noted the effect of lagged funding and the need to reduce the shortfall between target and enrolment. The proposal was to use sub-contractors for the delivery of some £250,000 of funding for delivery mainly via distance learning for 615 learners which will help raise our target figure to 90 - 93% of target. By failing to hit targets the College risks returning monies to the SFA and being regarded as a persistent under-performer. He outlined arrangements and processes in his report (Doc.C12/38) and in attached appendices to ensure that quality provision will be delivered to our students - due diligence, the flowchart for approval process, the subcontractor pre-qualification checklist, Sub-Contractor Quality Information, and Services Agreement for Partnership Delivery. Prior to any agreement the College must seek approval from the Skills Funding Agency and the College's external auditors RSM Tenon. RSM Tenon had given approval in principle and the

SFA had been consulted and recently confirmed their agreement. The Senior Leadership Team had given its approval and selection of sub-contractor(s) would be monitored and approved by the Director of CIS, IT and Finance following due diligence and reported on a monthly basis in the Management Accounts.

The Chairman invited the Principal to talk governors through the philosophy. The Principal noted the need to reach at least 90% of target and that Pankaj Makwana had considerable experience of sub-contractors and had used the proposed contractors, Tribal. Many Colleges successfully used contractors, including those with outstanding status, and Tribal had a good record and their own reputation to maintain. It was not without risk but the greater risk was not hitting target and returning monies to the SFA. It would also give the College a platform for some co-delivery with Tribal. Tribal would recruit the students and run the courses themselves and the College would carefully monitor success rates to ensure quality of provision and report back to the Corporation. The Deputy Principal concurred and confirmed no money would be paid to the sub-contractors until we have proof of learner eligibility and existence. The proposal to contract out for £250,000 was modest, a number of the courses would be short courses of 9 hours delivery where success rates are high. He also noted the College's well-developed marketing campaign for January starts and the work with employers and Havant Borough Council to bring in students from other directions.

Members posed questions and discussed the proposal in some detail. It was confirmed that courses would be branded as South Downs and Ofsted would primarily be concerned by the success rates, and the College would incur no costs.

The Chairman referred to page 4 of the Service Agreement and asked the Deputy Principal to ensure clarification on this clause. He considered that the risks had been fully assessed by the College and sub-contracting was an innovative way to reach targets based on the rules imposed by the funding bodies. It involved mostly short courses of 9 hours offered to employers who Tribal will chase for students.

On the proposal of the chairman, it was AGREED unanimously

- (i) That approval be given to the use of sub-contractors for the delivery of funding EFA and SFA.
- (ii) That the Principal and the Director of CIS, IT and Finance be authorised to finalise details and enter into contracts accordingly.

998. Premises Issues – Building and Accommodation Update
(Doc.C12/39 was circulated with the agenda)

The Deputy Principal updated members since his last report on 14 June 2012

Skills Funding Agency Renewable Grant 2011/12 – As previously reported the College had received the offer of a £100,000 renewable grant on the provision of matched funding of £200,000 by the College. The work had been delivered in the required timescale and included a refurbished Theatre Foyer entrance and rear entrance to the Courtyard Café, upgraded lighting to improve energy efficiency, upgrades to ventilation and air-handling systems, updates to male showers in the Fitness Centre and enclosing the linkway between the South East Building and East building.

Football Facilities - The pitch had been completed and a successful opening ceremony took place on 19 October attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Havant, Gwen Blackett, Ray Bolton, Havant officers, College staff and students and others, followed by a reception in the newly refurbished College Restaurant. There was a guest appearance from the visiting Osiligi Maasai Warriors and the event was attended by the Portsmouth News and received good coverage including in the Mayor's blog. The completion of the facilities had been hampered by the main contractor going into liquidation some ten days prior to the scheduled handover and alternative contractors were sought to complete the work in time. Associated costs will be deducted from the main contractor. Disruption had been minimal as both the carpet and

lighting for the pitch had been arranged by the College by direct order and the Quantity Surveyors involved had previous experience of contractors going into administration. The Deputy Principal had met with the Head of Sport and Public Services and other staff earlier in the day who confirmed arrangements were working well with bookings for all five evenings of the week and Saturday mornings and they were looking at usage at half-terms. It was anticipated that the final costs would come in much as scheduled taking into consideration any retentions following the main contractor going into administration.

Half-Term Maintenance Works – A successful programme had taken place over half-term using the College's own team of painters which included teaching and learning assistants and staff on term-time only contracts.

The report was RECEIVED.

999. Monitoring of College's Statutory Duty to safeguard children and promote the welfare of young persons and vulnerable adults.

(Doc.C12/40 was circulated with the agenda)

The Deputy Principal noted this annual report was in a similar format to previous years and included the revised Safeguarding Policy in line with legislative changes and relevant training had been received. The College had introduced ID badges for students as well as staff. Other safeguarding arrangements included: CRB checks for staff, safeguarding training and updates for staff, counselling, college nurses who see thousands of students over the course of the year and make suitable arrangements for students to travel home when they are unwell, and the extensive CCTV system. Members were reminded that Health and Safety was reported separately to the Corporation on an annual basis.

On the proposal of the Chairman it was AGREED:

- (i) That the Safeguarding Children, Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures (Appendix 1) be ENDORSED by the Corporation and SIGNED by the Chairman.
- (ii) That the Report be RECEIVED.

1000. Instrument and Articles of Government

(Doc.C12/41 was circulated with the agenda)

The Clerk reminded members that the Corporation had received the statutory amendments and agreed no further changes to the Instrument and Articles of Government (Doc.C12/16) on 14 June 2012. Doc.C12/41 represented a clean and complete copy of the proposals agreed by the Corporation.

On the proposal of the Chairman the revised Instrument and Articles of Government (1 April 2012) were RECEIVED.

1001. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 13 December 2012 at 5.45 pm.

1002. Urgent Business

The Chairman reported that he had recently received two letters from the College's executive members of the UCU, who represented the teaching staff, concerning the management of change. He had responded to the first letter in some detail point by point having first discussed the letter and his response with the Principal. He had not responded to the second letter which went over similar points as he knew that the Principal was meeting with UCU on Friday. He considered the governor remit was a trustee role involving strategic direction rather than the day-to-day management of the College and the Principal had his full support. The Principal advised she was disappointed that the Unions had not discussed their concerns with her in the first instance, and they had not copied her into the letters they had sent to the

Chairman or raised their concerns at their meetings with the Deputy Principal. One concern was in respect of key goals for staff and she advised that these followed from the Strategic Plan and the College was well on its way to making improvements to retention and success rates. Communication between SLT and staff had also been raised and she had delivered a difficult message to staff at the June briefing in terms of funding, enrolments and savings that had to be made. She had given a fuller explanation of the financial position at her staff briefing on 22 October. Further ways of communication were now in place and she invited questions from members.

Chris Harpum requested permission from the Chair to address the meeting. He noted that managing change was difficult and made clear that the Senior Leadership Team fully supported the Principal's values, mission, vision and assurance and leadership for the students in our community. Peter Rhodes advised he had spoken to UCU members and seen both letters and the reply. The Principal had given high priority to the problems faced and something radically needed to be done straight away. When interviewed for the post of Principal she displayed such passion for making change and she had not shied from her responsibility and many staff agreed. Communication had been improved with weekly briefings, monthly staff voice meetings and a suggestions box. The Principal thanked Chris Harpum and Peter Rhodes for their comments. She noted some staff were worried and she believes we are a fabulous staff and she wants to re-assure them as much as possible. She was meeting with the Unions on Friday in order to work together as a team to lead the College to outstanding status once again.

The Chairman noted the present economic climate was difficult for every business and he was confident that by empowering the Principal we will have a Grade One College sooner than we may otherwise have done.

The Principal reported that an HMI had visited the College for the day on Thursday to shadow staff and she read out his email which was full of praise for the College and staff and she would make all staff aware.

[The meeting was declared closed at 7.42 pm.]

Sg.151112