

Minutes of the Esher College Corporation
held on Thursday 25th March

* Present

* Mr Terry Price (Chair)

* Mr Keith Blackwell	* Mr David Lavarack
* Mr Michael Butlin	Mr David Lowe
* Mrs Susan Effendowicz	Mr Paul Monaghan
* Mr James Smith	Mrs Susanna Burleigh
Mrs Carole Ann Roycroft	Mr Chris Johnson
* Mr Robin John	* Mrs Pam Whyman
* Mr David Irving	Dr Clarissa Wilks
* Cllr Peter Hickman	* Mrs Jo Canessa
* Mr Michael Kemsley	* Ms Heidi Jagger

In attendance: Mrs Sue Gunter: Clerk to the Corporation
Mr Dan Dean: Deputy Principal (Advising Officer)
Ms Emma Young: Deputy Principal Designate

Observer: Mrs Stella Halloran: Clerk to Godalming College

Terry Price welcomed the two new student governors to their first full Corporation meeting. He also congratulated Dan Dean and Emma Young on their respective appointments as Principal and Deputy Principal from September. He welcomed Emma Young to her first Corporation meeting and noted that she would also be attending committee meetings and the full board meeting in the Summer term as part of her induction process. Finally he welcomed Stella Halloran, who was attending the meeting as an observer.

Part I

1. PRESENTATION ON THE TUTORIAL PROGRAMME
By Carolyn Francis (Director of Student Support)

Carolyn Francis made a brief PowerPoint presentation on the tutorial programme within the College. She explained that there is a weekly session for all students with virtually all teachers required to be tutors. The sessions are 70 minutes long, with all students required to attend the first 45 minutes. The remaining time is used for tutors to see individuals. The framework for the tutorial programme focuses on the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda. Planned activities for year 12 comprise induction, becoming an independent learner, health, UCAS and exams. In year 13 the sessions cover UCAS/after Esher, our environment, more UCAS/after Esher, personal support and exams.

She demonstrated the information that was available on the student portal and circulated examples of the booklets used in the programme. Terry Price asked how popular the sessions were and what steps were taken in respect of absentee students. She said that in general the sessions were well attended and students recognised the importance of the material covered. Student governors supported this view. Student feedback was taken seriously and students were involved in the design and delivery of some sessions. Michael Butlin praised the quality of the material used within the programme. Terry Price thanked Carolyn Francis and she left the meeting at this point.

2. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

The Chair asked if anyone had any interests to declare with regard to the agenda of the meeting. None were declared.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Susanna Burleigh, Carole Ann Roycroft, Paul Monaghan, David Lowe, Chris Johnson, Clarissa Wilks.

4. CONSTITUTION

Terry Price advised that the external governor vacancy had been advertised in the local press and three applications had been received. The Review/Search committee had considered these at their meeting in February and recommended that two of these applicants be interviewed by Keith Blackwell, Terry Price and Carole Ann Roycroft. The interviewing panel recommended the appointment of Daniel Evans, whose CV had been circulated with the agenda for this meeting. The meeting agreed that he would add to the skills mix of the current membership. David Lavarack proposed that Daniel Evans should be appointed as an external governor. Susan Effendowicz seconded this and it was approved unanimously by the meeting.

It was agreed that he should take Anne Grant's place on the Audit and Remuneration committees for the summer term, but noted that the membership of committees would be reviewed in the normal way in September. David Lavarack agreed to act as his mentor.

5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

These were agreed and signed as a true record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Item 6 Principal's Report The FTE figure for part-time staff is included in this term's report. The cash flow statement is now being produced in A3 format.

Item 9 Updated personnel procedures Keith Blackwell confirmed that next review dates would be put on College policies as part of the rolling review of policies.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Keith Blackwell went through his written report page by page, highlighting the most significant items and inviting questions from governors. Under Staffing, he confirmed that now the Principal and Deputy Principal posts had been filled internally, the process was underway for the appointment of a new Assistant Principal. There was a rolling programme for the recruitment of other new staff and the response to adverts for September vacancies was positive so far.

In terms of Enrolment and Funding, the College's enrolled targets in 2009/10 for both 16-18 and adult learners were above target, generating £300,000 of activity funding above target, although the College only received an additional £19,000.

The College had made representations to the LSC concerning unfunded students in 2010/11 and the LSC had confirmed that there had been an error on their part and that funding would be consolidated into the following year. Due to very high conversion rates, the College was expecting to have at least 100 more full-time students than anticipated in 2010/11. This had been discussed in detail at this term's Policy committee meeting where it had been agreed that the College should honour all provisional offers that had been made, despite the pressures on space and resources that this would cause. In discussing this point, while governors agreed that this had been the right approach they were clear that College numbers could not be allowed to increase year on year. Keith Blackwell advised that admission arrangements for the following year had been amended to give the College more control of the process. In addition the Policy Committee would be discussing the wider question of the optimum size of the College at their summer meeting and this would be brought to the July Corporation meeting.

The College's position in the League tables was very good and compared favourably with other schools and colleges, without relying on selection. The Staff Development sessions planned for the summer term would include a day devoted to student support issues and safeguarding training. In terms of Curriculum Development, all departments had just completed either a course or class forum and were analysing the resulting feedback. The current core Key Skills qualifications of Communication, Numeracy and IT would cease to exist in September 2010, and an alternative curriculum offer was being devised. Adult and Leisure activities continued to be strong. The Progression and Guidance department was busy preparing for the HE fair which would welcome around 80 universities. Wider skills week was also being planned, although there was a dearth of work experience placements.

In terms of Partnerships, the College continued to interact with Surrey County Council in preparation for the 1st April handover. A meeting was planned with Richmond Council to discuss commissioning arrangements, and the College continued to play a key role in the Elmbridge Schools Partnership and had hosted an International festival with pupil representatives from year 2 to year 10 attending. In terms of Curriculum and Other achievements, the College had entered the prestigious "Schools Mace" national debating competition and won the first round. The College production of "The Insect Play" had surpassed the successes of previous years. Great advances had been made in sporting provision with a number of new clubs being introduced - cheerleading being a particularly popular option. In terms of Accommodation and Estates tenders for the refurbishment of the Tower Block and associated works had been received and planning permission was being sought for temporary classrooms for September.

Finally, Keith Blackwell reported back on the reception at Number 10 to mark the work of outstanding sixth form and FE colleges. It was pleasing to note the strength of the S7 partnership with Reigate and Godalming Colleges also present.

Student Council Report

The Student Governors highlighted the main points of this, reporting raising more than £700 for Haiti, the importance of raising awareness of the Esher College Africa Trust and their plans for leavers' day.

Finance Reports

Mike Kemsley advised that the Finance Committee had requested one amendment to the new format for the accounts, but otherwise commended the revised presentation. There was little else to report as the figures to date were very much in line with budget. Mike Kemsley proposed approval of the Finance Reports. This was seconded by Jo Canessa.

Quality Improvement Plan

The committee considered this page by page. It was noted that it was too early to report on items 1-10. Keith Blackwell considered point 14, concerning the future direction of the vocational programme, to be particularly important as were points 19 and 33 which concerned safeguarding and equality and diversity. Dan Dean advised that robust work was being done in developing statistical analysis of equality and diversity data (point 37). Terry Price queried point 29 which was to develop a new procurement policy and which was annotated as "not achieved". Keith Blackwell confirmed that it had been delayed but should be completed in the summer term.

8. GOVERNORS TRAINING DAY

The Clerk advised that the topics for the governors training day had been discussed at the Review/Search meeting in February. The time allocation for the consideration of the Self Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan had been reduced slightly in view of the shorter nature of the document. It was proposed that Geoff Bowley and Dan Dean should make a presentation on various aspects of College finance, and Mike Kemsley agreed to join this team in his capacity as Chair of the Finance committee. A short session on the new Ofsted framework with reference to equality and diversity would be made by Emma Young. The morning would be completed by student focus groups. All agreed that this was a good programme for the morning.

9. UPDATED DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR SENIOR POSTHOLDERS

Terry Price confirmed that the updates to this policy merely reflected new ACAS terminology and was based on the standard SFCF model. David Lavarack proposed approval of the policy. This was seconded by Michael Butlin and approved unanimously by the meeting.

10. UPDATED RETAINING DATA POLICY

Keith Blackwell advised that the policy had been amended so that interview notes for unsuccessful job interviewees be held for 12 months (previously 6) in order to bring this into line with the period for which unsuccessful job applications are held. Peter Hickman noted that the table on the reverse of the policy still referred to 6 months, and this needed to be amended to 12. Subject to this amendment, Peter Hickman proposed approval of the policy. This was seconded by Michael Butlin and approved unanimously by the meeting.

Keith Blackwell advised that the College had a rolling programme of policy reviews.

11. GOVERNORS ANNUAL REPORT

Keith Blackwell introduced this Report which had been examined in detail by the Review/Search committee. In answer to a question from Terry Price, Keith Blackwell advised that the Report could only be produced in the spring term because it included data which was not available until that time. It would be published on the College's website. Governors agreed that the Report provided a useful detailed overview of the College and that it could be a useful document for wider circulation.

David Irving proposed approval of the Report. This was seconded by Jo Canessa and approved unanimously by the meeting.

12. CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE POLICY

Terry Price advised that the Policy committee had considered this in detail and recommended that the Corporation provided a letter of support for the revalidation of the Investors in Careers Award. Carole Ann Roycroft had volunteered to attend the assessment on 12th May. David Lavarack proposed approval of the policy and letter of support. This was seconded by Michael Butlin and approved unanimously by the meeting.

13. REPORTS BACK FROM COMMITTEES

AUDIT

Robin John said that the main issues considered by the committee were the strategic risk register update and the Internal Audit Needs Assessment and three year plan. The latter had been included in the papers for this meeting and he proposed approval of these. This was seconded by Peter Hickman and approved unanimously by the meeting.

ESTATES

In the absence of Paul Monaghan, Keith Blackwell summarised the main issues discussed. The future accommodation strategy had been covered in the Principal's Report. There were no Health and Safety issues. The student governor had raised an issue about the condition of the smoking shelter and this had since deteriorated and needed attention. An additional security officer had been employed from 10-2pm to police the smoking shelter. Peter Hickman queried the reference to Elmbridge council with regard to the problems with the road outside the College as this would be the responsibility of Surrey County Council.

Action: Clerk to clarify with Geoff Bowley.
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FINANCE

This had been covered in the discussion of the Finance Reports under 7 above.

POLICY

Terry Price advised that the policies recommended for approval at the meeting had been dealt with earlier in the meeting. In its discussion of the optimum size of the College, the committee had agreed to focus on the immediate issue of the September 2010 intake and would be considering the long term view in its summer term meeting.

REVIEW/SEARCH

In the absence of Carole-Ann Roycroft, the Clerk confirmed that all the matters discussed at the meeting had been covered by the agenda of this meeting.

REMUNERATION

There had been additional meetings of the Remuneration committee as part of the process for the appointments of the Principal and Deputy Principal, and these had been reported back to governors.

14. MATTERS ARISING FROM ACADEMIC STAFF/STUDENTS

Pam Whyman was concerned at the increased numbers of students attending the College and the impact this had on workload of some staff. Keith Blackwell acknowledged this and said that work was being done to see how this could be mitigated.

The student governors did not have any issues to raise, but had settled in well to their new roles.

15. GOVERNORS ATTENDANCE AT COLLEGE

A number of governors had attended the College production in February. Most governors had been involved at some stage of the selection and appointment of the Principal and Deputy Principal. There had been two additional Corporation meetings to approve these appointments and additional meetings of the remuneration committee. Terry Price thanked all governors for their commitment to the College during these processes. Finally, David Lavarack, Susanna Burleigh and Robin John had formed the panel for a meeting of the Special Committee.

- 07.01.10** Terry Price meeting with Principal re Principal interviews
- 11.01.10** New Principal interview panels: Terry Price, Mike Kemsley, Anne Grant, David Irving, Clarissa Wilks, Susanna Burleigh, Paul Monaghan, Philip White and Pam Whyman.
- 12.01.10** New Principal interview panel: Terry Price, Clarissa Wilks, Carole Ann Roycroft, Robin John, Mike Kemsley, Pam Whyman and Daniel Hill.
- 02.02.10** Terry Price with Principal re Deputy Principal interviews
- Feb:** College Production: Terry Price, Susan Effendowicz, Anne Grant and Carole Ann Roycroft.
- 11.02.10** Terry Price re Deputy Principal longlisting
- 12.02.10** Terry Price to sign letters of invitation to interview
- 23.02.10** Michael Butlin for Environmental meeting
- 25.02.10** Deputy Principal interview panel: Terry Price, Anne Grant, David Irving, and David Lavarack.
- 26.02.10** Deputy Principal interview panel: Terry Price, Mike Kemsley, Robin John, Clarissa Wilks, Joanne Canessa and Heidi Jagger.
- 01.03.10** David Lavarack, Robin John and Susanna Burleigh – Special Committee for appeal.
- 10.03.10** Michael Butlin for Vince Cable's visit.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Pam Whyman requested that the wording of the Confidential Resolution be amended to reflect the fact that staff and student members are asked to leave the meeting at this point.

Action: Clerk to ensure that the wording on the agenda and minutes is altered.

17. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Thursday 6th July 2010

18. CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTION

Terry Price proposed that in view of the confidential nature of information to be dealt with in Part II of the agenda that representatives of the press, members of the public, staff and students should be excluded from the meeting during the proceedings to which this resolution applies.

Chair

Date