

# Minutes of the Full Governing Body Committee Meeting Held on Tuesday, 24 June, 2008 at 7.00 pm

**Present:**

Mr Peter Alcock  
 Mrs Margaret Buckley  
 Mr Brian Coxhead (Vice Chair)  
 Mr John Fogarty  
 Fr Paul Glover  
 Mr Gerry Hill  
 Mr Rod Hill (Chair)  
 Mr John Humphreys  
 Mr Donal McCormack  
 Mr Mike Nencini  
 Mr Rob Peacock  
 Mr Karl Smith  
 Mrs Helen Stevenson  
 Dr Christine Tyler

**Observers:**

Miss Esi Appiah-Anane  
 Mr Christopher Ashcroft

**College Personnel:**

Mr Nick Burnham  
 Mrs Michelle Williams  
 Ms Rosie Woods for Agenda Item 5  
 Mrs Alison Fishwick (Acting Clerk)

The Chair welcomed Miss Esi Appiah-Anane (Student Governor) and Mr Christopher Ashcroft (Acting Deputy Student Governor) to the meeting.

***Before commencement of the meeting Mr Rod Hill, Mr Brian Coxhead and Mr Peter Alcock were presented with their Governor Long Service Award Certificates presented on behalf of the Archdiocese.***

*The College Chaplain then led the Governing Body in prayer.*

**1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. Apologies**

Ms Kath Boullen, Canon Leo Stoker and Mr John Perry.  
*In the absence of Mr Perry, Mrs Fishwick was appointed Acting Clerk.*

**3. Minutes of the Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2008**

The Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

**4. Matters Arising**

**Agenda Item 4 Matters Arising from Item 8 – Telephone Masts**

The Director of Resources reported that the College continues to take legal advice on this matter. The College is presently writing a second letter to Orange regarding their withdrawal from site. In respect of T Mobile the College is obliged to find an alternative location on site. The company have been asked for a cost breakdown on this but this has not yet been received. The Director of Resources will report back to Governors as events unfold.

#### **Agenda Item 4 Matters Arising Item 9 – Amnesty International**

Governors noted that there has still been no response from Amnesty International despite two letters from the Principal therefore it was reluctantly agreed to remove this item from the Agenda.

#### **Agenda Item 4 Matters Arising Item 5 – Framework for Excellence**

The Vice Principal reported that the College has been graded as Outstanding. The College does have some reservations however about the grading methodology. For example, the Learner Views was graded as only 'good', it was believed that the survey may have been contextualised to take into account the variance in responses expected in relation to the students' level of study. One or two grades in Finance were "satisfactory" as the methodology used makes comparisons with General FE Colleges rather than comparing like for like.

**The Governors noted the College's tremendous achievement.**

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Report of the Governors' Strategic Planning Day – 19 January 2008**

It was highlighted by the Chair that the Minutes stated that a report would be prepared for the next Full Governing Body meeting in June detailing actions on the points raised during the day. These action points were then to be referred to the Search Committee in order for the Committee to consider the issues of governance and make further recommendations. The Chair reported that unfortunately this has not taken place but it had been agreed at the Search Committee meeting held earlier that this report will now be presented to the first meeting of the Search Committee in September for consideration at the Full Governing Body meeting in October. The Chair apologised for this oversight. Discussions on proposed dates for the next *Strategic Planning Day* will be raised under Agenda Item 18.

#### **4b Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Governing Body held on 22 May, 2008**

The Chair took Governors through the key points of the meeting.

**The Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.**

#### **5 Chaplain's Annual Report for 2007-08**

The Chaplain presented the Annual Report to Governors circulated with the Minutes. The Chaplain wished to place on record her thanks to Fr Tom Neylon for the support he provides to Carmel College, especially in view of his greater responsibilities as both Vicar General and Canon. The Chaplain's thanks were also extended to the College for its support during her ten year role co-ordinating the Archdiocesan Chaplains' Network.

At this juncture both the Student Governor and the Acting Deputy Student Governor gave an overview of their experiences of the chaplaincy provision which was both positive and complimentary.

**Governors asked the Principal to write formally to Fr Tom Neylon on behalf of the Governing Body congratulating him on his appointment as Vicar General and Canon and thanking him for his support for Carmel College.**

#### **6 Principal's Report: Progress on the Building Project**

The Principal tabled his report detailing progress on the Build Project since the Governing Body last met on the 22 May, 2008.

The Principal reported that at this meeting the Governing Body received the news that the Learning and Skills Council had given approval to the Application in Detail; the College has since received formal written notification of this approval.

The Principal took Governors through the report, highlighting in particular:

- a. The continued negotiations between West Park and Kier NW relating to access to the site. Failure to reach agreement will mean using the original access option alongside the existing entrance.
- b. The matter concerning delivery times to the site is still under negotiation; the planners are being as flexible as possible. There is confidence that the matter will be resolved in the next day or two.
- c. The Principal referred to the decision to bring forward the last day of term for students (Thursday, 26 June). Students will lose three working days as Friday, 27 June is the New Student Conference. This decision was made to enable staff to have sufficient time to pack and prepare for the beginning of the next academic year. Governors noted that it will be necessary to reconsider the calendar for next year as it is likely that the College will be faced with a similar situation.
- d. Phase 2 discussions have taken place with the Project Manager. Governors noted that the LSC did not wish to commit to an Application in Detail made in excess of 12 months before the commencement of the build, therefore Phase 2 has been delayed until next summer when an Application in Principle will be resubmitted with updated costs. The Principal added that the letter from the LSC giving approval for Phase 1 clearly encourages Carmel to pursue Phase 2. There are issues however concerning the Main Entrance of the build which in the design will be joined to Phase 2; discussions with the LSC are needed to see how this can be managed.
- e. The Finance, Estates and Marketing Committee asked the College to consider the most appropriate pattern for meetings in order to ensure that progress on the build is effectively monitored. The Principal suggested that although the development stage of Phase 1 is now completed it still requires close scrutiny, particularly in adherence to the quality of build agreed. It was proposed therefore that, as the remit of the Finance, Estates and Marketing Committee focuses on the College estate, it would seem appropriate for that Committee to monitor the progress of the build as well as the financial implications. The recommendation is that at each meeting there is a timed Agenda Item to which all members of the Board are invited and can contribute and that the Accommodation Working Party can reconvene once Phase 2 commences. Governors noted that additional meetings of the Finance, Estates and Marketing Committee have been added to the Governors' Meeting Structure.

**Governors agreed to trial this arrangement.**

**Governors noted the content of the Principal's Report.**

**Governors approved the changes to the holiday pattern.**

**Governors approved the temporary postponement of work on Phase 2.**

Governors wished to express their disappointment that Phase 2 has been put on hold and were keen that the College kept in close touch

with the LSC. Governors suggested whether the College should write to the LSC expressing their fears that funding may not be released for Phase 2 and reiterate the commitment of the College, to be written in such a way that it would oblige a written formal response for future records. The Principal reported that it was the National Property Committee that turned down Phase 2 and that LSC advisers were also disappointed; it was felt that the postponement related to cost certainty of the project rather than for any other reason.

#### **7. Raising Expectations : Changes in the Machinery of Government and the Implications for Carmel**

The Principal gave a presentation providing an insight for Governors on the changes, including the new funding methodology.

It was noted that the College had finally received the Additional Learning Support funding which was higher than expected. The financial forecast for 2008/09 is £7,912,347, the College is extremely pleased.

Governors noted the key elements of the changes and there was some general discussion surrounding some of the points. Some discussion focused on the proposed 'federation' of two of the Warrington schools which are partner schools to Carmel and the possibility that they may investigate sixth form provision on site. This will be closely monitored.

**Governors agreed wholeheartedly to the Principal's summing up when he declared that in addition to remaining active in the 14-19 Partnership the College will above all else continue to maintain its quality provision.**

#### **8. LSC Annual Planning Review: Carmel's progress against the Three Year Development Plan and the Development Plan 2007-2010**

Governors noted the Three Year Development Plan as circulated with the Minutes. The Director of Resources drew Governors' particular attention to **Page 2 Enrolments** which showed that enrolment for the 16-19 cohort was 3.37% up as at 1 October, 2007 (projection 1485, actual 1535). For the HEFC provision, as detailed on **Page 3**, enrolment was up by 21% - estimated target 107, actual 129.

The Student Governor asked for an explanation of Success Rates. It was explained that Success Rate is equal to the percentage of students who pass multiplied by the number of students who start and successfully complete their course.

**Governors noted the report and the positive variances.**

The Strategic Summary 2008/09 was omitted from the Governing Body papers circulated. The Principal therefore gave a verbal summary of the content for Governors to note. The omitted document will be posted to members of the Board.

*Mr Brian Coxhead gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point.*

#### **9. The Financial Forecast and Commentary 2008-2011**

The Financial Forecast and Commentary were approved by the Finance, Estates & Marketing Committee. The Chair commented that three years is a long time to focus on a plan and it was more important to focus on next year's budget adding that the concern for the Finance Committee was the estimate relating to the Pay Award, a 1% increase will impact by 60K.

Referring to Page 8 Sensitivity Analysis it was noted that the likelihood of a 1% pay award should read H (High) not L (Low).

**Governors noted and approved the 2008-2009 forecast as the operating budget for 2008-2009.**

**10. IT Strategy 2008-2009**

The Principal took Governors through the IT Strategy Report as circulated, explaining that the main theme relates to the upgrading of the College's VLE. The aim is to develop a central portal for both students and staff to access different services for example, information on EMA, the Management Information Services, course material, on-line testing and the internet. Governors noted that all costs associated with the Strategy are met within the budget.

A Governor enquired as to the rationale behind opting for Microsoft packages. The Director of Resources responded that the College did look at alternatives but it was felt that using Microsoft enabled the College to build on what is already in place. The College noted that the Authority has led an enormous procurement exercise on network facilities, which has involved organisations such as the St. Helens Chamber, to provide a platform for Building Schools for the Future. Indeed £3m has been allocated to the strategy. It was noted that there may be opportunities for shared procurement particularly in respect of wireless networks.

**Governors noted and approved the IT Strategy.**

**11. Risk Management Annual Report**

The Vice Principal reported that the risk management documentation has been to Audit Committee and the College Management Team; the Action Plan for Risk Management is presented to the Management Team once a term. There were no recommendations from Internal Auditors. The Vice Principal tabled a list of minor amendments made to the Risk Management Action Plan, the Disaster Recovery Plan, the Risk Register and the Risk Management Policy. These were noted and approved by the Governing Body.

**12. Confidential Report of the Accommodation Working Party of 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008**

**Governors noted the report.**

**13. Report of the Search Committee of 11 March, 2008**

**Governors noted the report.**

**14. Report of the Personnel & Quality Assurance Committee of 6 May, 2008**

**Governors noted the report.**

**15. Report of the Audit Committee of 3 June, 2008**

**Governors noted the report.**

**16. Report of the Finance, Estates & Marketing Committee of 12 June, 2008**

This was tabled and the Chair summarised the key points. **Governors noted the report.**

**17. Urgent Report of the Finance, Estates & Marketing Committee of 24 June, 2008 at 6.00 pm**

The Loan Arrangements for the New Build

The Director of Resources reaffirmed the loan arrangements already approved by Governors:

- That the provider of the loan finance to support the capital project will be Barclays Banks plc and the loan facility agreed.

Governors noted that both the College Management Team and the Finance, Estates & Marketing Committee had recommended that the Development Period Loan should remain variable using the lower of the two rates on offer at the point of draw down i.e. LIBOR or Bank Base and that the interest rate for the Term Loan should be at a fixed rate from LIBOR from completion of the development but that the rate should be fixed as soon as possible. Funds would be drawn down once the loan facility has been approved. The Director of Resources added that this strategy will allow the College to plan for the future. The Chair also added that the costs are as previously approved by the Governing Body.

Governors noted that the rationale for this decision will be set out formally for the benefit of future Governors. The rationale will be specific to this particular funding arrangement and that it had been agreed that the Principal will draft the wording for consideration at the next meeting of the Finance, Estates & Marketing Committee.

**Governors approved the following recommendations:**

- i) **To note the contents of the report**
- ii) **To approve the contents of the report**
- iii) **To accept the facility letter and terms and conditions contained within**
- iv) **To authorise to countersign and return the Facility letter**
- v) **To authorise the Principal and the Director of Finance to implement the finance documents on behalf of the College**

**18. Urgent Report of the Search Committee of 24 June, 2008**

The Committee resolved to commend Ms Appiah-Anane's appointment to the Governing Body as Student Governor for 2008-09 and for Mr Christopher Ashcroft who was runner up in the election to deputise.

Governors noted the date for the next Strategic Planning Day as Saturday, 31 January, 2009.

**Governors approved the appointment of the Student Governor**

**19. Proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2008-09**

**The additional Finance, Estates & Marketing Governing Body Meetings were noted.**

**20. Any Other Business**

None.

**21. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 14 October, 2008

**22. Election of Vice Chair of Governors 2008-10**

There were no nominations received for election of Vice Chair of Governors, Mr Brian Coxhead was therefore re-elected nem. con.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.

Signed on this day .....

By the Chair .....