

IHo arrived at this point.

ACTION

- GO reminded the Board that a group of Governors, who were available at short notice, had been identified and, when appropriate, these members would be asked to convene to discuss progress on the project under discussion. These Governors included IHi, SL, MP, the Chair and Principal. It was extremely important to monitor the situation closely to take advantage of opportunities as they arose so that swift decisions could be taken;
- NB added that the Governors' decision to accept changes to the senior management structure had relieved stress on those involved and enabled the College to make progress in its future development. Thanks were reiterated to Governors' for their help and support.

7. **School liaison: Saddleworth update**

RL introduced a bespoke DVD, produced in-house by the College, which was aimed at Saddleworth school pupils. This DVD was part of the liaison activities in schools and two ex-Saddleworth students had been involved in its production. The intention of the Liaison Team was to produce a DVD specific to each school, using ex students to promote their experiences at the College and these would be available by the summer. The DVD, which lasted 10 minutes was then played.

Governors agreed that this was an excellent promotional DVD. ES added that the DVD summarised exactly the essence of the discussion at the last Board meeting.

RL explained that the DVD would go on line and be accessible from computers anywhere, although a copy could be made available to Governors if they so wished.

8. **Committee business**

Quality Committee

RL reported on the business of the Quality Committee, referring to Minutes and supporting papers that had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were noted:

- the main agenda item had been a detailed discussion of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Summary Development Plan;
- this document had been the subject of a brief presentation at the last Board meeting, when PR had highlighted the main points, in particular the Indicators of Success in terms of raw results and success rates. RL reiterated that if the College were to be inspected now results could hardly be better;
- as could be seen from discussion, the Committee agreed that the SAR was an excellent, comprehensive document and acknowledged the amount of work required to produce it;
- comments included the suggestion to place more emphasis on the positive aspects of the Report, particularly in light of plans to open a Science Centre, where reference could be made to the fact that the College was over-subscribed for this subject;
- the College sought to constantly improve results and the small number of subjects where concern had been expressed had resulted in a change of curriculum. As a result, Human Biology would no longer be offered at AS level as (a) it overlapped with other subjects, (b) it was difficult to teach and (c) students would not be disadvantaged in any way in University applications as this subject was not one of the requirements. GCSE courses in IT had also been removed from the Curriculum Offer as only 5 students had enrolled onto the course the previous year and Level 2 IT was readily available in schools. Computing and English Dual had been less successful in the summer examinations and as a result there had been a change of Exam Board, and in the case of Computing the appointment of a new Head of Managed Area and Course Leader. Business was the only other subject causing concern, although it was felt that this year's disappointing results had been a one-off incident as results in this area were usually excellent;
- reference was made to the new Diploma. Despite its mixed reception in the national press, the College would be delivering this qualification in 2009 and progress was being made slowly to ensure quality of provision when it was introduced into the curriculum. It was noted that the International Baccalaureate was scheduled for 2010.

Discussion followed:

- ES queried the reference to the Annual Assessment Visit, which PR confirmed no longer took place. The current Inspection cycle ended in 2010 but it was believed that the College would be inspected at some point during the current academic year. This Inspection would offer an opportunity for the College to be established as *Outstanding* and thereby classified as self-regulating. JC added that once self-regulating the College would only have a desk review to confirm that self-assessment processes were robust and that standards were maintained;
- SL asked how much time AC had spent assessing the College's grades and whether this College provided the same service to others? NB explained that PR was currently negotiating a group of high-quality Colleges to work together to benchmark against each other. PR added that once formed, the group would measure each other's performance and by so doing, provide greater legitimacy to the processes in place;

- the annual review of the AGM established that despite disappointing attendance it was important to continue to hold the event as it gave the College an opportunity to showcase its achievements over the previous year. It was decided that more extensive advertising could attract a wider audience and various alternative dates and times were discussed. **It was agreed** that Wednesday, 30 April immediately after a Board meeting was the best option.
- the Agenda for the AGM was then discussed and **it was agreed** that presentations could include the new *Regional Science Centre* and *Finance* (considered necessary as financial management contributed significantly towards the College's outstanding success). Governors' suggestions were invited. The event would be filmed this year and excerpts would be shown on the College website with a view to attracting future participants;
- discussion of changes to the College website had taken place earlier in this meeting;
- the Framework for Excellence (FfE) had been presented at a previous Quality Committee meeting as a single framework to measure success in both FE and Sixth Form Colleges. However it was now considered to be more relevant to FE Colleges than first thought.

RESOLVED:

that the SAR and Summary Development Plan were accepted by the Board; and
that the recommendations regarding the AGM and College website were accepted by members.

8. **Updates****Monthly Management Accounts**

BB led this item, adding that a signed copy of the Year End Accounts would be circulated as soon as possible. The following comments were noted:

- some additional income had been received which could be placed in reserves to offset the forecasted operating deficit and the Income & Expenditure Account had been revised accordingly.
- although the current situation implied a deficit budget, similar predictions in previous years had been turned into a surplus by the end of the year;
- an invoice had been issued for the NRF grant income;
- the Charity Bond had expired and £2.5M had been placed for a further 3 months;
- the LSC had sent a letter to all College's re-profiling the remaining grant to be paid but had now informed Sixth Form Colleges that this letter should not have been sent;
- grant funding of £150,000 could be available to Colleges in terms of efficiency grants under the new *Energy Efficiency and Sustainability for Greener Colleges* initiative. The College was working with AA Projects to complete and submit the detailed capital application form. Under this initiative, it was planned to replace the College's 23 boilers, which were currently 15 years old and no longer running efficiently. The Estates Manager had obtained several quotes, the lowest being £190,000. If the full grant of £150,000 was received a further £40,000 would be taken out of contingency funds, thereby releasing £150,000 back into the Planned Maintenance budget. The deadline for applications was 11 February with all work to be completed by 1 October 2008. If successful, this would be the major project undertaken during the summer months;
- the Sensitivity Analysis had been updated. The College currently had 80 students that were not funded this year but student numbers had been adjusted in predictions for future years so that full funding would be received;
- the Balance Sheet showed a revised outturn.

In the absence of any questions, the Chair thanked BB for a very comprehensive report.

Health & Safety

NB informed the Board that a full report on the organisation of health and safety in the College would be brought to the next meeting.

Student Association

HB reported that:

- a Talent Show, entitled *The College has Talent* was currently being organised. The Association may conduct a survey to decide which charity to support, although many students favoured supporting Francis House;
- the election process for the new Student Association Executive would begin soon and a message would be placed in the Student Bulletin inviting nominations. A meeting had been organised with Student Representatives to discuss what was involved in the role of the various Executive members;
- the Student Association Accounts were presented to the Board for approval.

Discussion followed:

- SL commented that it was useful to see the Student Association Accounts and asked who was responsible for over-viewing them. JC pointed out that there was a one-line Report in the Monthly Management Accounts but it was agreed that BB would oversee them in the future;

NB

BB

- JH queried which charities were supported. HB explained that much support had been given to Dr Kershaws the previous year but students felt that a charity supporting children and young people (Francis House) would be more appropriate. *Pink Day* was always run in support of Breast Cancer Care;
- JH added that it was difficult to choose from so many worthwhile charities but agreed with the decision to support a few local ones;
- BB informed the Board that a new minibus had been purchased recently with Parental Donations and the old minibus had been donated to Dr Kershaws.

RESOLVED:

that the Student Association Accounts were accepted by the Board.

Any other business

The Chair reminded Governors about the National Governors' & Clerks' Conference to be held at the Midland Hotel in Manchester on 6-8 March, 2008. The full programme for this event should be available soon and the Clerk would circulate details as soon as possible. Any Governor interested in attending to contact the Clerk.

KW

Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting would take place at **5.30 p.m.** on Wednesday, 30 April, 2008 in Meeting Room 1, followed by the AGM from 6.30 p.m. in the Small Lecture Theatre.

Items of confidentiality

Governors agreed that some of the discussion under *Principal's business* was confidential and should be recorded separately and not included in the published Minutes.

The meeting closed at 6.00 p.m.

Submitted to Board for approval: 30 April 2008

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chair of the Corporation