



**Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday  
10 October 2007 at 5.00pm in the Board Room, York College**

**Present:** Mr J Short (Chair)  
Miss H Crook  
Mr K Deadman (from minute 07.62)  
Mr G East  
Mr M Galloway  
Professor B Gilbert  
Mr D Jackson (from minute 07.58 – 07.71)  
Mr D Marsh  
Mrs J Moore (from minute 07.58 – 07.73)  
Mr D Morgan  
Mr A Mendus  
Ms S Phillips  
Councillor C Runciman (from minute 07.60ii)  
Ms T Wolf

**In Attendance:** Mr T Armer, Director of Finance  
Mrs M Birch, Clerk  
Mr G Murdoch, Deputy Principal QA and Customer Support  
Mrs M Price, Director of Teaching and Learning  
Mrs A Tyrrell, Deputy Principal Operations

**Action**

**07.58 Apologies for Absence/Declarations of Interest**  
Apologies had been received from Miss Bainbridge, Mr Burrows, Mr Clark, Mr Johnson and Professor Maughan Brown.

It was agreed to take Item B4a next.

**07.59 Governance Issues – Corporation and Committee Appointments**  
The previously circulated report was considered and supplemented by an oral report from the Clerk. After consideration the following was agreed:

- a) Chair's action to appoint the HE Student Member for a term of office to conclude 31 July 2008 )
- b) approval of the interim Student Union Constitution amendments as detailed in the report )
- c) the appointment of Sonya Phillips as the FE Student Member for a term of office to conclude 30 May 2008 ) Clerk
- d) the appointment of Peter Vaughan as a Co-opted Member of the Personnel Committee for a term of office to conclude 31 October 2010. )

The Chair welcomed Sonya Phillips to her first Governing Body meeting.

Governors noted that some vacancies on Committees remain. An advertisement had recently been placed seeking expressions of interest from individuals to serve on Committees. Following consideration, the Search and Governance Committee would make recommendations to the next meeting of the Governing Body meeting. It was recommended that a similar advertisement could be placed annually to ensure appropriate continuity and Governor succession planning.

Clerk

**07.60 Minutes of Previous Meetings**

i Confidential Minutes - 2 July and 12 July 2007

The previously circulated confidential minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Councillor Runciman joined the meeting at this point.

ii 12 July 2007

The previously circulated minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair subject to the deletion of the sentence under paragraph 3 on pg 5 "It was noted that the College could not afford to offer WBL provision without the receipt of appropriate funding."

**07.61 Matters arising**

The action summary sheet from 12 July 2007 was noted. With reference to the North Yorkshire LSC Provider Development Plan 2007-08 (minute 07.54 refers) the Deputy Principal Quality Assurance and Customer Support (QACS) reported that LSC has approved the Plan.

Mr Deadman joined the meeting at this point.

**PRINCIPAL**

**07.62 Principal's Report**

The previously circulated report was considered and supplemented by an oral report from the Principal.

New College

The Principal reported that the history of the College goes back over almost two centuries and that bold and courageous decisions had been taken by individuals during that period to provide education in the City. He considered that decisions taken in the recent past to create the New College will be viewed as equally important as history unfolds. Governors have provided a significant, unpaid and largely invisible contribution to the achievement of this success. The significant work undertaken by staff across the College was further noted with particular recognition of the Estates, IT and Migration teams and the Deputy Principal Operations. It was noted that enrolment had gone more smoothly this year when planning had been within a hypothetical

context. The Principal felt that students will benefit greatly from the significant facilities which the New College affords.

**Archbishop Holgate School Sixth Form Presumption**

Regarding the post 16 presumption at Archbishop Holgate School thanks were extended to those Governors who had commented on the College's draft consultation response. The consultation timetable was noted. One consequence of consultation to date is the clarification by the School that there is no intention to offer A Level provision. This represents an important adjustment to the School's proposals. The College response, however, reiterates the initial fundamental doubts regarding the proposal. As reported at the Governors' residential event in March, the government policy regarding sixth form presumption is largely geared to metropolitan areas. There has been no change in government policy and, if the proposal succeeds, it will lead to greater fragmentation of provision locally. There is a further risk of other schools taking a similar path. Previously it has been identified that the balance of provision in the City of York was correct. However, this balance has changed since the strategic review involving a merger of two local schools. If Archbishop Holgate School succeeds in offering post 16 provision it is likely that pressure will be placed on other schools to respond similarly.

The Principal reported that recent government departmental changes (the creation of the Department for Industry, Universities and Skills etc) will give Local Authorities greater responsibility for 14-19 provision. By no later than 2010 Local Authorities will commission provision from schools. This means that the climate now is different to when Archbishop Holgate School first indicated its wish to exercise the sixth form presumption. Mr Deadman, as a local headteacher, reported that there are 11-16 schools which aspire to offer sixth form opportunities and others which are content to work with the College to develop provision. It is likely that some would wish to offer A Levels but it is uncertain whether this is realistically achievable.

It was noted that the approval process for Archbishop Holgate School remains unclear; however, both the Local Authority and the LSC would be involved with LSC considering the capital implications linked to the curriculum offer. The Local Authority could raise objections to the proposal but it is unclear whether this would affect the outcome. The new government 14-19 funding model will mean Local Authorities taking a planning role although the implications of this have yet to be articulated. One view is that this will simply be a means of channelling the funding; another view is that there will be a reversion to the pre-1993 position where different geographical areas received very different levels of funding. There is concern in the sector that this situation does not re-emerge. It was noted that York College attracts students from a number of geographical areas and that all 16-19 learners, excluding apprentices, are funded equally.

## Action

It was noted that the proposal for Archbishop Holgate School indicates a pilot sixth form from 2008 with a full cohort from 2009. The new funding arrangements, as discussed earlier, are scheduled to be implemented from no later than 2010. It was further noted that the Learning Partnership, the LSC and the Local Authority have to devise and submit a strategic plan by December 2007 on how all learners have access to provision. York College is contributing to this process. Given the importance of these issues it was **agreed** that these form an agenda item for the next meeting. It was noted that the York Council EMAP Group will discuss the Archbishop Holgate School proposal on 6 December and it was **recommended** that the Chair or Vice Chair attend this meeting.

Principal

Chair / V  
Chair

### North Yorkshire Colleges

Slow progress has been made regarding the collaborative arrangements involving North Yorkshire Colleges, partly as one college would prefer to operate independently. The Principal indicated the need to establish a statutory entity which could, for example, take responsibility for funding contracts and audit arrangements and which could carry the reputational risks. Initial discussions have centred on a joint venture company. The college Principals are to meet later in October to consider the legal implications in terms of governance. It was **agreed** that progress would be reported to the next Governing Body meeting. If this initiative does not proceed the College will need to consider other alliances, possibly through the 157 Group, and regional or sub regional opportunities. In considering the merits of the North Yorkshire Colleges' option it was noted that York College already undertakes a significant volume of activity with these colleges. The Principal considered that, if this alliance could be structured more robustly, it would benefit the College. Governors noted that a joint venture company would not make it more difficult to drive FE Means Business (FEMB) forward and that the recognition of a statutory entity could open up extra opportunities for the colleges involved.

Principal

### Self Regulation

The recently received documents regarding self regulation were noted. The significant shift in the possibility that colleges may be able to validate their own qualifications is an important and welcome development. The College will respond to the consultation exercise independently and as a member of the 157 Group.

### Association of Colleges (AoC)

It was noted that no appointment had been made to the position of AoC Chief Executive. The AoC is now looking to review its purpose and strategy and will make proposals to the AoC Conference in November.

## **07.63 Strategic Plan 2007-10**

The previously circulated draft Strategic Plan was considered and supplemented by an oral report from the Principal. The Strategic Plan

Summary had also been circulated for information. It was noted that the draft Strategic Plan had been revised following consideration by Governors in July. This further revision sought to highlight the College objectives more clearly. In discussion of the document the following was noted.

An issue had been raised at an internal Self Assessment Report validation meeting regarding the Skills for Life strategy and the lack of cross referencing within the Strategic Plan. It was noted that LSC has stressed the whole college approach and the College has been trying hard to embed this appropriately through Key Skills, etc. Given that Skills for Life will be a focus at inspection it was considered that this should be referenced more clearly. The Principal **agreed** with this view and undertook to discuss the ways to achieve this with Mrs Moore.

Principal

Overall, Governors considered that the Strategic Plan reads well which is an achievement given the nature of the document. Subject to the action as identified above, Governors **approved** the draft Strategic Plan.

Principal

**07.64 Search and Governance Committee – 5 July 2007**

The previously circulated minutes and confidential minutes were noted. It was further noted that an oral report had been presented to the previous Governing Body meeting.

**07.65 Governance Issues**

i Review of Annual Schedule of Business

The previously circulated report was noted. The Annual Schedule for 2007-08 was **approved** subject to the addition of a report on Health on Safety as a regular agenda item.

Clerk

ii Report on Governance KPIs: 2006-07 and 2007-08

An oral report was received from Ms Wolf, Chair of the Self Assessment Group. It was noted that KPIs had been considered by the Governors' Self Assessment Group on 18 September. A recommendation would be made to the Search and Governance Committee before being submitted for Governors approval.

Clerk /  
S&GC

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**07.66 Director's Report**

The previously circulated report was considered. A supplementary table indicating learner numbers against target, with comparative data for previous years, had been circulated separately with copies available in the meeting. The Director of Teaching and Learning highlighted the key elements from which the following was noted.

Learner Numbers

Detailed consideration was given to the learner number data which

identified current enrolments against target numbers for 1 October and the full academic year. It was noted that data referred to learners not Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) unless otherwise stated. Achievement against the different Brand Plans was considered.

An additional allocation had been requested from LSC for FT 16-19 in view of the New College effect. Initial indications are that the allocation has just been exceeded. However, additional work is required to ensure other funding criteria are met, for example minimum length of programmes. There has been a lower retention than expected between AS and A2. This is being investigated and the outcomes will be reported to the Quality and Curriculum Committee. The figure for PT 19+ is similar to the comparable period for 2006-07. Although Train to Gain (TtG) shows a significant negative variance it has a different accounting year and incorporates a "roll on, roll off" enrolment process. Additional learners are to be entered onto the system for Work Based Learning (WBL) which currently shows 303 against a 1 October target of 374. It was noted that WBL CITB should read "Construction Skills" for which there are fewer Year 1 entrants than target. The HE figure of 443 exceeds the budgetary funding provision. The International figure is positive. The Director of Teaching and Learning confirmed that enrolment had been achieved by a huge team effort with assistance from staff across the College.

#### Room Allocation

Room allocation has been challenging and the process is still being embedded. Regarding extra space required for construction, until additional space is leased work is being undertaken to maximise resources within the New College and some use is being made of practical space at Askham Bryan College.

#### Success Rates

Success rates for 2006-07 have shown some significant improvements, for example within the apprenticeship framework and Key Skills. Further achievements are still being finalised in some areas. As previously reported, the Quality and Curriculum Committee will consider the success rates in detail.

DTL

#### Audits

Learner records for WBL and TtG have been subject to audit. Initial oral feedback from the WBL audit indicates that further work will not be required. The contract for TtG is managed through Askham Bryan College. A number of follow up points have been identified but the final report has yet to be received.

#### Quality Improvement Programme

A Quality Improvement Programme has been introduced into the Directorate for 2007-08. Actions within this will be undertaken alongside those identified within the Self Assessment report.

Governors discussed in detail a number of items from the report. With regard to TtG it was noted that work is generated both through brokers and through College staff who work with employers within the North Yorkshire and North East areas. The senior management team track the work closely and consider that the current TtG target is achievable. As the funding for TtG is outcome related if the College attracts the learners and identifies people to deliver the provision expenditure will be balanced by income generated. It was noted that the College employs a range of ways to engage with employers including telemarketing. All curriculum areas have a responsibility for employer engagement and use their links to help identify relevant employees for training. A proportion of the work is also subcontracted.

The financial consequences of not achieving learner targets including 19+ and HE were considered. It was noted that the 19+ target of 3,532 is that planned for 1 February 2008 (not 1 October 2007) and that distance learning candidates are still being enrolled. For HE it was noted that 549 is an ambitious target. This includes new provision some of which has not recruited. The current 443 figure is higher than the HE 2006-07 figure at a comparable period. It was further noted that when the HE Brand Plan was agreed it was recognised that the targets were aspirational. In view of this, and previous years' recruitment patterns, the financial figure included in the budget is lower than the target within the Brand Plan. The budgeted financial target has been achieved. However, the College has confirmed to Higher York that it anticipates taking up its full allocation. In response to a query the Director of Teaching of Learning provided a breakdown of success rates for GCEs. It was noted that, at this point, it is not possible to identify whether lower grades at AS Level had been a factor in reduced number continuing onto A2. It was further noted that improving value added will be critical factor in enabling the College to achieve its strategic aim of being within the top 10% of colleges for overall learner success rates.

## **FINANCE**

### **07.67 Director's Report**

The previously circulated report summarising activities since the previous Governing Body meeting was noted.

### **07.68 Finance and General Purposes Committee**

#### **i Meeting of 12 July 2007**

The previously circulated minutes were received. It was noted that an oral report had been presented to the previous Governing Body meeting.

#### **ii 27 September 2007**

The minutes, and confidential minutes, were circulated in the meeting and supplemented by an oral report from Mr Morgan on behalf of the Chair, Miss Bainbridge. Items which had been considered included

the International Report which had identified an increase in learner numbers, appropriate vetting procedures for in-country agents, and a new proposal for delivery of in-country provision. The Committee had raised questions regarding the resources necessary to support this proposal and further information would be brought to the next meeting. Financial issues considered included the draft 2006-07 Management Accounts which projected an outturn of 1.4% above the Mid Year Forecast. An underspend against the capital budget had resulted from deferrals into 2007-08 or items absorbed within the New College construction contract. The Committee had confirmed its satisfaction with the Treasury Management Policy which would be kept under review. The list of College staff with statutory responsibilities had been received and it was **agreed** that this document be circulated to all Governors for information. A number of items had been considered as confidential the discussion of which forms part of a separate confidential minute.

Clerk

iii Draft 2006-07 Management Accounts

The previously circulated report was considered as a confidential item for which a separate confidential minute was taken.

**07.69 Risk Management Report**

The previously circulated report was considered and supplemented by an oral report from the Director of Finance. It was noted that senior management is discussing with the internal auditor, Bentley Jennison, the internal audit strategy for 2007-08.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CUSTOMER SUPPORT**

**07.70 Directorate Report**

The previously circulated report was considered and supplemented by an oral report from the Deputy Principal Quality Assurance and Customer Support from which the following items were noted.

Student Services

The new Info Zone providing access to Student Services is working well although it has been extremely busy at the start of the academic year. College staff had participated with staff from the Children's Trust Unit in an updating session on working with children, young people and families.

Education Maintenance Allowance/Adult Learning Grant (EMA/ALG)

There are approximately 850 learners with either an EMA or ALG.

Complaints 2006-07

The Complaints Report was noted. A total of 90 complaints had been received, 20 more than in 2005-06 and 10 more than the average for the previous 6 years. A major reason for the increase relates to EMAs. With this excluded, no area showed a significantly increased incidence of complaint.

Information Systems

A largely successful transfer has occurred within the New College although some issues remain for some individuals or areas.

Staff Survey 2007

A further analysis of information from the Staff Survey was circulated in the meeting. Governors noted the main actions arising from responses. It was noted that the information obtained will help identify trends in responses from the old and New College. It was further noted that the 5 year average results do not show a significant variance in responses. However, 2 questions from 2007 had returned lower satisfaction rates – one relating to progression opportunities and one relating to the way in which staff feel valued. Governors noted that, as many teams have a flat structure, it would be difficult to achieve a more positive response although the College does encourage staff to pursue opportunities. It was noted that the HR Manager is keen to establish focus groups to help work on the results of the survey in order to improve overall satisfaction. In response to a query regarding benchmarking with other colleges, it was noted that, under the Framework for Excellence, the College will need to under benchmarking and may use the National Learner Survey data for this purpose. Further items which may indicate staff satisfaction are absence rates and staff turnover. It was further noted that the number of respondents in 2007 was significantly lower than the previous year and that it would be interesting to consider the number of respondents and levels of satisfaction following migration to the New College.

Full details will be presented to the next meeting of the Personnel Committee including the impacts from actions taken a year ago. Staff are able to complete the survey anonymously and in some instances have not indicated whether they a member of the teaching or support teams. This makes analysis of reasons for dissatisfaction harder to identify.

Socioeconomic Impact Study

York College, together with approximately 30 other colleges, is participating in this study. This will help identify the College's impact on the region and for the individual learner. A final report is anticipated in December. The information from this will be used with employers and prospective learners to demonstrate the benefits of engaging with York College.

The Excellent Team

Governors noted that an IT and Computing Tutor has been shortlisted within the innovation category for annual STAR awards. The College has also received a highly commended award from the National Training Awards as a result of its work within the Yorkshire Accord partnership.

**07.71 Student Union Report**

The previously circulated report was considered and supplemented by an oral report from Ms Phillips, Student Union (SU) Executive member. It was noted that elections for the vacant SU Executive posts have generated significant interest. The Freshers' activities were less successful than anticipated but a further event is being held in January when students will be more familiar with the College. A joint Halloween/Bonfire Night social event is being held from which it is hoped to generate funds. Sales of the NUS Extra card have been positive. Learners are being encouraged to keep the social area in the first floor lounge tidy although some difficulties have been experienced. Governors noted that learner feedback on the New College has been positive although comments have been made on the number of fire alarms experienced.

Mr Jackson left the meeting at this point.

The Deputy Principal Operations reported on a number of student related issues including litter, parking and cigarette smoking. A briefing for students is being disseminated through tutors to draw these items to students' attention again. Managers are being asked to be proactive in challenging inappropriate behaviour and to reiterate respect for others so that the facilities can be enjoyed by all. Senior management are working with the City of York Council, Community Wardens and Tesco regarding issues affecting the College boundaries. It was noted that the College has no jurisdiction over parking in local side streets but is reiterating with students the need to have consideration for others. The Principal further reported that a Ward meeting had been held in the College at which parking had been raised. This had focused on the ability of residents to park and also access for emergency vehicles. With regard to the fire alarms, Governors noted that some sensitivity had been experienced with equipment for which adjustments have been made. However, the alarms did demonstrate swift and safe evacuation of the College.

**07.72 Personnel Committee – 12 July 2007**

The previously circulated minutes, and confidential minutes, were considered. It was noted that an oral report had been presented to the previous Governing Body meeting.

**OPERATIONS**

**07.73 Deputy Principal Operations Report**

The previously circulated confidential report was considered and supplemented by an oral report from the Deputy Principal Operations for which a separate confidential minute was taken.

Mrs Moore left the meeting during discussion of the above item.

**07.74 New College Strategy Group – 9 July and 18 September 2007**  
 The previously circulated confidential minutes were considered. It was noted that an oral report from 9 July had been received from the Chair, Mr Johnson, at the previous meeting. Professor Gilbert, on behalf of the Chair, provided an oral report from 18 September. Group members had expressed their disappointment that David Johnson had been unable to attend the first meeting in the New College and noted the substantial debt which Governors owed to him and to the senior management team. This contribution was recognised by all Governors and it was noted that the Chair had earlier written to thank Mr Johnson.

**07.75 Any Other Business**

i Identity Cards

It was noted that Governors have not yet been issued with Identity Cards for the College and the Clerk undertook to notify them of the procedure for this.

Clerk

ii College Childcare Nursery

The Deputy Principal QA&CS reported that the Nursery had been inspected by Ofsted earlier in the week. The grades awarded were 3 "Outstanding" and 2 "Good". These results place the Nursery within the top 2% of nursery provision. Governors noted this very positive inspection result and recorded their pleasure and congratulations to all staff involved.

iii Reunion of Norwegian Students

The Principal reported that a reunion would be held at the College in November of previous Norwegian learners and that several Norwegian school principals will also attend.

iv Governor Training Event – Wednesday 31 October 2007

It was noted that the Deputy Principal QA&CS would present an item on peer referencing and the HR Manager would discuss operationalising the HR Strategy. In addition there will be a tour of the New College for Governors' partners prior to the dinner at 7.00pm.

**07.76 Date of Next Meeting**

Noted as Thursday 13 December 2007 commencing at 5.00pm. An updated copy of the 2007-08 meetings schedule, previously circulated, was further noted.

The meeting closed at 7.42pm.

**Signed:**

**Chair:** .....

**Name:** .....

**Date:** .....

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
*John Short*  
 13.12.07