

THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE - COLCHESTER

Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting No 61 held on Thursday 9th July 2009

Chair	Andrew Claiborne
Present	Peter Barker, Andy Beatty, Elizabeth Blundell, Fernne Brennan, Claire Budgen, Gerry Callen, Ashley Cobbold (part only), Moira Collett, Syd Kent, Ian MacNaughton, Tracy Mbiriri (part only), Carol McAuley, David Morran, John Owens and John Stenhouse
In Attendance	Adrian Frost, Jan Harker, Faith Ressmeyer, Martin Sparks, Ian Thompson and Allan Tucker
Clerk	Celia Douglas

The Chair welcomed Student Governors Tracy Mbiriri and Ashley Cobbold to the meeting and all those present introduced themselves

Agenda Item

61.1 **Apologies for Absence**

Noted Graeme Clissold, Sue Edwards, Mary Frank and Observer Frances Grew. 041/09

61.2 **Appointment of Governors**

Ratified **a) The recommendation of the Chairs and Search Committee to re-appoint Graeme Clissold as a Community Governor for a further term of 4 years with immediate effect was approved.** 042/09

61.3 **Minutes of Meeting No 60 held on Thursday 5th March 2009**

Approved **a) The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record.** 043/09
Noted b) There were no matters arising. 044/09

61.4 **Principal's Matters**

Noted a) *Summer Examination series:* 045/09
The arrangements for the series had been very pleasing. IB results were received on 5 July with the College average score of 31 points. AS/A level results are due on 20th August and GCSE results on 27th August.

Noted b) *2009/2010 LSC Recurrent Funding allocation:* 046/09
This matter had been minuted from discussions at recent Personnel and Finance & Premises Committee meetings. The LSC Funding Allocation received in June is relatively good news. This represents a slight 'squeeze' to the College but is a significantly better allocation for 2009/10 than most Colleges will face (including SFC's).

Noted c) *2009 Admissions:* 047/09
Applications remain buoyant and currently the College has greater oversubscription than in previous years. It is likely that between 500-650 students will be unable to join for year 12 (lower sixth). The Principal commended Assistant Principal, Martin Sparks and his team for all their hard work and made particular reference to the first class work carried out by Dianne Jones, a member of staff within that team, who is retiring this July after 21 years with the College.

Noted d) *Local Strategic Developments:* 048/09

	- The new build Sixth Form Centre (16-19 school) at Ipswich is scheduled to open in September 2010	
	- ECC's Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester is now in the final statutory stage. The plan remains for proposed closures of Alderman Blaxill, Thomas Lord Audley and Sir Charles Lucas, with the latter being replaced by an Academy. There is still some uncertainty regarding the funding of capital allocations but ECC has indicated it is prepared to borrow money to progress the plans. There has been a significant amount of work involved in redrawing catchment areas in Colchester, which will also affect primary schools.	
Noted	e) <i>DIUS abolition/merger and Machinery of Government Changes:</i> Machinery of Government changes are scheduled for implementation in April 2010. DIUS has recently been abolished and subsumed into the Business and Innovation Skills Department, (responsible for post 19 education). Other changes will roll out next April. These changes will inevitably have an impact on the Instruments & Articles of Governance. The responsibility for planning numbers and provision is yet to be determined and it is not clear what the exact roles of the Local Authority, Department for Children, Families and Schools (responsible for up to 18 year olds) and the YPLA (quango responsible for 14 – 18 year olds will be Regional). LSC staff will be transfer by 'TUPE rights' to the YPLA. The Regional YPLA for the East will be located in Ipswich. If there were to be a change in Government at the next General Election, this would very likely have an impact resulting in further significant changes to the structure. In the meantime, business will carry on as usual. It was recognised that the economic downturn may result in an expectation for the College to further increase the number of students and planning for this has been made in the Property Strategy including a focus on some additional accommodation for the existing site. Recurrent funding isn't under as much threat as it could be, as it is now all core recurrent funding with relatively little initiative funding. Withdrawal of initiative funding is the first likely action of Government in the current context.	049/09
	f) <i>Other:</i>	
Noted	- It had been a very good period since the finish of exams. Student participation in the Summer short courses Term activities and programme has been very good – a range of events including beach sports held at Clacton yesterday (involving over 100 students and plan to return in September, weather permitting). This week a very successful Arts Festival has been held, which students have engaged positively with and staff had worked very hard on.	050/09
Noted	- A memorial meeting will be held in September for students and staff following the death of Janice King, Head of Maths Department, yesterday morning.	051/09
61.5	<u>Student Matters</u>	
Noted	- The Chair of the Student Council, Tracy Mbiriri advised that since the end of the AS exams there had been lots of successful events to date, which many students had taken part in and the feedback received had been very positive.	052/09
Noted	- The Vice-Chair of the Student Council, Ashley Cobbold advised that the Leavers Ball for Year 2 Students had been very successful and made a £50 profit. A global blast was held on Wednesday evening, which was set-up by ex-students for charity and almost £1,000 had been raised for the trip to Alaska. Today's Arts Festival activities had been amazing and very well supported. <i>Tracy Mbiriri and Ashley Cobbold left the meeting</i>	053/09
61.6	<u>Personnel Matters</u>	
Noted	a) The unapproved minutes of the meeting of the Personnel	054/09

	Committee number 54 held on Monday 8 th June 2009 were received.	
Noted	b) <i>Matters arising:</i> - The annual Personnel Committee meeting with the Union Reps had taken place (only 1 attended). No concerns were raised.	055/09
Noted	c) <i>Equality & Diversity/Inclusive (Personalised) Learning Monitoring Report 2007-2008:</i> - The Chair of the Committee (DM) referred to the exceptionally good work carried out with great enthusiasm on equality and diversity at the College by Senior Tutor, Mark Griffin-Sherwood.	056/09
Noted	d) <i>Update on Support Staff Salaries for 2009/10</i> Traditionally, the College had followed the national agreement of pay awards for teachers and support staff. It had been suggested that for 2009/10 support staff may be offered a lower percentage rate than teaching staff. However, the Principal updated that the SFC had now collectively agreed a clear consensus that they wished for the agreement of the pay award for support staff to be at the same percentage level as teaching staff. The 2009/10 agreement is unlikely to be reached until September.	057/09
61.7	<u>Finance and Premises Matters</u>	
Noted	a) The minutes of the Finance and Premises Committee number 22 held on Tuesday 21 st April 2009 were received.	058/09
Noted	b) There were no matters arising.	059/09
Noted	c) The unapproved minutes of the Finance and Premises Committee number 23 held on Monday 22 nd June 2009 were received.	060/09
Noted	d) There were no matters arising.	061/09
Noted	e) Cost Centre Review and financial reports for May 2009 - The Finance Manager (AT) presented this report, circulated previously, advising that there were no significant variances in 'YTD Actual' and -v- budget. The total favourable variance between Actual and Budget at 31 st May is just £49K. The latest Forecast Outturn figure for 2008/09 has been assessed at an Operating Surplus of £37K.	062/09
Noted	- The LSC issued guidance in the 2008/09 handbook relating to Colleges whose projects are now on hold until the next Public Spending review. Previously such expenditure has been capitalised in the balance sheet under fixed assets as it will form part of the total cost of build once completed. Due to the uncertainty as to whether the LSC approved AIP project will now proceed in its original form, for the 2008/09 accounts, capitalised expenditure for projects on hold is to be expensed to the income/expenditure account which now shows £37K surplus on the operating account and a property write-off of £323k less £101k resulting in an expected operating deficit of £185K for the current year. This means expending rather than carrying forward and has yet to be fully agreed with Auditors.	063/09
Noted	The draft balance sheet shows that all is in line with the budget and the current cash at the bank.	064/09
Noted	f) College Budget for 2009/2010 Attention was drawn to the last page of this report which displayed columns of actual figures for the last financial year, 2008/09 original budget, 2009/10 proposed budget and between columns the percentage increases. LSC recurrent income for 2009/10 is £15.9M equating to a 2.03% increase based upon the funding of extra students. Overall the Operating Deficit stood at £94K, less transfer from the Re-evaluation Reserve resulting in an Operating Surplus of £101K on a £15M budget.	065/09
Approved	The recommendation for the College Budget for the year 2009/2010 was proposed by Syd Kent, seconded by Gerry Callen and approved.	066/09

Noted	g) Three-year Forecast and commentary – 2009/2012 The three year forecast shows operating deficits of £110k for 2010/11 and £130K for 2011/12. The LSC recurrent funding grant assumes a 2% increase, which will maintain a breakeven position for the next two years. The College Financial Health Grade is Good under the new LSC “Framework for Excellence” assessment and this status should continue for the next four years.	067/09
Approved	The College Three-year Forecast and commentary for the period 2009 to 2012 was proposed by Gerry Callen, seconded by Moira Collett and approved.	068/09
Noted	h) Fees and Lettings for 2009/10 The annual review of fees and lettings for the charges made by the College were outlined together with recommendations.	069/09
Ratified	The fees and letting charges for 2009/2010 were ratified.	070/09
Noted	i) College Finance Regulations The annual review of the College Financial Regulations had resulted in two changes: Page 15 (emboldened) relating to goods received that prove to be incorrect or faulty and Page 24 (emboldened) procurement process; the auditors felt that hits should be incorporated into the regulations.	071/09
Ratified	The College Financial Regulations were ratified.	072/09
Noted	j) Property Strategy Works Update including LSC Capital Review, College AiD - The Principal updated on this item on behalf of the Senior Manager for Accommodation and Resources. IM advised that he had spoken to the relevant committees updating on the current position of the Capital Project which is effectively at a standstill. The LSC completed their ‘Review’ in June and only 14 Colleges out of a 140 who have been assessed as ‘shovel ready’ will be able to progress their AiP Projects to AiD, but will have to scale down their projects. No further advances will be made until next June at the earliest and new criteria is awaited. The BREEM are likely to disappear. The new criteria may place the College in a better position than many others – AIP approved projects if emphasis is placed upon ‘need’ and ‘quality of performance’	073/09
Noted	- Details of the May half term works and summer works programme were provided in the Property Strategy Update tabled at the meeting	074/09
Noted	- The Finance Manager (AT) asked for Governors to approve the purchase of 150 computers for the College by the IT Department, advising that this was within the current capital ICT expenditure budget. Three suppliers had submitted proposals and a chosen supplier identified. An in depth discussion took place regarding the ILT Strategy of the College and the Committee was advised that the IT Manager, Tim Harrison would be attending the next Audit Committee meeting to discuss the ILT Strategy.	075/09
Approved	The purchase of 150 computers for the College from the current capital expenditure budget was approved.	076/09
Noted	- A demonstration on Moodle (the College Virtual Learning Environment System used for Students), will be given at a future Governing Body meeting - which Carol McAuley kindly agreed to present. Action: Clerk	077/09
61.8	<u>Audit Matters</u>	
Noted	a) The unapproved minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee number 41 held on Thursday 11 th June 2009 were received.	078/09

Noted	<i>b) Matters arising:</i> - A report was presented by the Internal Auditors, which covered two visits. They had been particularly impressed by the College's Risk Management and Assistant Principal, Frances Grew was thanked for her work on this. Although there was a lot of detail there were no major issues raised.	079/09
Noted	- The IT Strategy was discussed and it was agreed that the IT Manager, Tim Harrison, as mentioned in 61.7(j), would be invited to the next meeting on 23 rd November and the outcome would be reported back at the following Governing Body meeting. The review of data protection would form part of this discussion. Governors were invited to attend and asked to inform the Clerk if they wished to do so.	080/09
Noted	Action: Governors - The External Auditors had presented their proposed plan for 2009/10 and there were no surprises in this.	081/09
61.9	<u>Curriculum Matters</u>	
Noted	a) The unapproved minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum & Standards Committee number 28 held on Monday 11 th May 2009 were received.	082/09
Noted	<i>b) Matters arising:</i> - The Chair of Committee (MC) congratulated staff on the outstanding result of the Ofsted Good Practice visit. The Principal advised that he had attended a National SFC event at Cambridge the previous week and during Melanie Cavanagh's (Ofsted Inspectorate) address she advised that there were 3 outstanding Colleges, one of which was Colchester Sixth Form College, the only one in the Eastern Region.	083/09
Noted	- A couple of Admissions Appeals had been heard (see c) and d) below), which had followed the new process of an appeal adopted by the Governing Body last September. The Chair (AC) thanked those Governors involved with the Appeals for taking the time to do so.	084/09
Noted	- Trips & Visits - At the time of the meeting there was a lot of anxiety regarding the potential severity of swine flu particularly regarding overseas trips. The situation was being kept under review.	085/09
Noted	c) The unapproved minutes of the meeting of the Appeals Committee number 4 held on Monday 27 th April 2009 were received.	086/09
Noted	d) The unapproved minutes of the meeting of the Appeals Committee number 5 held on Tuesday 16 th June 2009 were received.	087/09
Noted	- International Student Fee Remission Request. Governors were assured that this case had been thoroughly investigated and considered and there was no significant hardship.	088/09
Noted	Assistant Principal, MS, informed that the UK Border Agency, as part of the licensing process, now require the College to have a licence 'to accept overseas students' and were paying a visit to the College the following day regarding this matter. It is likely that the number of international students next year at College would be very limited.	089/09
	<i>Allan Tucker left the meeting</i>	
61.10	<u>Governance Matters</u>	
Noted	a) The unapproved minutes of the meeting of the Chairs & Search Committee number 29 held on Monday 11 th May 2009 were received.	090/09
Ratified	<i>b) Matters arising:</i> - <i>Key bullet points summary sheet</i> The provision of a 'summary' sheet containing key relevant bullet points for a trial period of one year beginning September Action: Principal	091/09

Noted	- <i>Governors February Training Evening</i> Governors were asked to consider the format of the evening e.g. possibly hold the meal at the beginning of the evening and to advise the Clerk of their views. Action: Governors	092/09
Ratified	- The revised Policy on Agendas and Minutes (circulated previously) was ratified.	093/09
Noted	- <i>Governors Honorary Award</i> One suggestion had been received, which was still under consideration and Governors were asked to advise the Clerk of any further suggestions. Action: Governors	
Noted	c) <i>Reports from visiting governors:</i> Fernne Brennan outlined her report which was circulated previously.	094/09
Noted	d) <i>To arrange for visiting governors for autumn 2009:</i> Claire Budgen and Gerry Callen will be the visiting governors for the autumn term.	095/09
Noted	e) <i>Governor Training:</i> - It was agreed that an update on the relevance to Governors of the new Equality & Diversity Bill, which will be passed in October and become effective a year later would be beneficial. It was hoped that an update would be available for December's Governing Body meeting with more detailed information to be provided at the February Training Evening. - Governors were asked to provide further suggestions for the Training evening to David Morran. Action: Governors	096/09
Noted	- It was acknowledged that a Parent Governor election will be held in the autumn. The Chair (AC) advised that he had spoken about this at the Parent Induction Evening, to which he had received a positive response, followed by several approaches.	097/09
61.11	<u>Management Matters</u>	
Noted	a) College Strategic Objectives 2009/10 Development Plan/SAR Vice-Principal, IT presented this item drawing particular attention to Nos 7 and 9.	098/09
Noted	A discussion took place about the link between the Strategic Objectives of the College and the Budget, and it was acknowledged that this was embedded in the College Strategic Plan.	099/09
Noted	With regard to the following: - No. 1, it was agreed that the further development of 'S' group provision should be added and removed from No. 5 - No. 3 should include reference to the work carried out with applicants prior to joining. Action: Vice-Principal	100/09
Noted	b) <i>Update on Inspection arrangements/Self-Assessment</i> A six year cycle of new Ofsted arrangements will commence in September. A shorter notice period spanning a maximum of 4 weeks and minimum of zero will be given. Emphasis will be placed on Learner Voice and Equality & Diversity. The focus will be on teacher/learning impact, results will have to be proven and evidence provided of methods in place to produce action.	101/09
Approved	c) <i>20010/11 Term dates:</i> The schedule of proposed term dates for 2010/11 was approved.	102/09

61.12 Any Other Business

Noted - The Principal reminded Governors that they were invited to attend the end of term drinks/retirement speeches on Tuesday 14th July at 12.35pm – 12.40pm. 103/09

Noted - Friday evening's event (10th July) had been cancelled
- The Principal advised that he had appointed a new PA, Julie Procter, who would be starting on 23rd July. 104/09

61.13 Dates of meetings for 2009/2010

Noted Governing Body: 105/09
24th September 2009
3rd December 2009
4th February 2010 (Training Evening)
4th March 2010
14th July 2010

Noted The proposed dates of the remainder of Committee meetings for the ensuing year were noted. 106/09

Chairman