



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation

**30th September 2011**

**Held in the Boardroom in the South Building**

**Present:**

Mr Warwick Hall (Chair)  
Mr Robert Hall  
Mr Russell Moseley  
Mrs Sandra Smith  
Mr Steve Stewart  
Ms Kollette Super  
Mr Paul Taylor (Principal)  
Ms Wendy Tomes

**In Attendance:**

Mr Jim Edwards, Acting Clerk to the Corporation & Director of Estates  
Mrs Christina Fowers, Vice-Principal Quality & Curriculum  
Mrs Gill Manthorpe, Vice-Principal Communications, People & Devt  
Mr Mark Payne, Vice-Principal Finance  
Ms Carrie Smith, Vice-Principal Commercial Development  
Mr Paul Miller, WCL Management Consultants

**C61/11**      **Apologies for Absence** were received from Mr Colin Hefford and Cllr Kevin Maton

**C62/11**      **Disclosure of Interest**

Given that the single item for discussion was the Strategic Options' Review, the disclosure of governors' and staff's interest was stated.

**C63/11 Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 16th September 2011**

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 16th September 2011 were confirmed as a true record.

**C64/11 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

- a) Under Minute C53/11, Staffing Review, it was agreed that governors would contact the Vice-Principal Communications, People & Development after the meeting to establish an Appeal Panel to hear an outstanding staffing review issue.

**C65/11 Strategic Options Review**

Mr Paul Miller from WCL Management Consultants presented governors with an updated report on the Strategic Options Review of "The Development of an Enterprise College Group".

It was confirmed that WCL Management Consultants had been appointed to undertake the Strategic Options Review and had commenced work at the beginning of August 2011. Unfettered access had been given to stakeholders and 50 people, representing either themselves or specific organisations, had been interviewed. The common understanding was that both City College Coventry and Warwickshire College wanted enterprise to be at their strategic, curriculum and operational heart, and that therefore the most appropriate and suitable structure for delivering that objective was the subject of the interviews.

It was reported that there had been extensive positive support from stakeholders for the enterprise concept, and, in particular, employers were keen to engage in discussions around further detail and substance.

In terms of the vision for the Enterprise College Group, however, most stakeholders requested greater detail of the content and how it might be implemented. There were also queries from prospective educational partners over the extent to which the vision would be different to the current work around employability and enterprise in colleges. All stakeholders nonetheless did understand that enterprise was not just about bolting on units within certain curriculum areas.

It was reported that several stakeholders had been keen to retain the distinct Coventry branding, and would not want it to be diluted in a merger or collaborative setting.

Many educationalist stakeholders, whilst understanding the need for collaboration, had indicated their scepticism over the need for merger, and believed that enterprise could be delivered by both colleges independently.

Turning to the possible structural options that would deliver the enterprise concept, Mr Miller reported that, after some analysis, nine initial options had been reduced to four potential options as follows:

- Option 1: Merger between Warwickshire College and City College Coventry, plus collaboration with other providers.
- Option 2: Merger between Warwickshire College, City College Coventry and

others, plus collaboration with the remainder.

Option 3: Soft Federation between Warwickshire College and City College Coventry, plus potential collaboration with other providers

Option 4: Soft Federation between Warwickshire College, City College Coventry and others, plus potential collaboration with other providers

In conclusion, it was reported that, from the interviews held, there was strong support for the enterprise concept in the Coventry and Warwickshire Enterprise College initiative; that issues remained, however, over the extent of the full development of the enterprise vision and the sharing of it with stakeholders; and that consultees, especially educationalists, were not convinced that a merger between Warwickshire College and City College was the most appropriate way forward.

The view of WCL Management Consultants, after further analysis, was that either a Soft Federation between the two colleges, which could potentially lead to a merger, or a full Merger were the most likely options to deliver the enterprise vision.

In response to a question about the 'do nothing' option, it was stated that this had not been in the remit of the Strategic Options Review. It was further stressed that this option is not an option, as both colleges want something different, particularly in the face of greater competition from schools, greater financial position, and the fact that larger employers were seeking larger partner organisations.

It was stated that generally a merger would be a more effective route in delivering structural change, and that a full merger would achieve this more quickly than a soft federation. It was further stated that a soft federation is usually massively hard work to manage, and that the impact would be lessened if just the two colleges were involved.

The curriculum map of both colleges was discussed and it was noted that there was not a huge overlap, thus meaning that there could be a good potential partnership.

It was stated that the enterprise vision needed a clearer and more detailed explanation. In addition, the description of what was meant by 'enterprise' should be expanded and broadened, as there was a dissonance between the understanding externally and internally.

Mr Paul Miller was thanked for his presentation and left the meeting at this point.

The Principal stated that there were no fixed views on the options as yet, but that, whatever is decided, the College should move quickly. Therefore, a resolution at the December 2011 Corporation meeting should be aimed for.

The Principal further stated that the next steps and the potential deal-breakers needed to be identified, and discussion took place accordingly, particularly around the advantages and disadvantages of mergers and soft federations.

It was noted that, in terms of the delivery of teaching and learning, mobile phone technology was increasingly being used, and that potentially a merger might help development of this particular area.

It was noted that the Warwickshire College and City College Coventry governors were meeting during week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011, and that thereafter there needed to be a Corporation meeting towards the end of the month to discuss the outcomes.

After lengthy discussion, governors resolved:-

- i) that the enterprise vision should be defined in greater detail;
- ii) the enterprise concept, and what the future college might look like should be explained in greater detail;
- iii) that a detailed explanation of how the vision would be both different and better than existing structures and initiatives should be provided;
- iv) that a map of the delivery of enterprise activities and potential clusters of specialism across the sub-region should be provided;
- v) that a common internal understanding of the vision and the route to practical implementation should be established;
- vi) that a stakeholder communications' strategy should be developed;
- vii) a strategy should be developed and the capacity put in place in order to communicate the vision consistently and well across both colleges, and to external stakeholders;
- viii) identify and explore all potential deal-breakers;
- ix) that a Special Corporation meeting should be held towards the end of October 2011 to update governors as to progress;
- x) that staff should be emailed with the updated position.

**C66/11 Date of Next Meeting**

The Corporation noted that its next meeting would be set for late October 2011.

**C67/11 Publication of Papers**

The Corporation resolved that all the supporting papers presented as part of the Strategic Options Review report should be withheld from publication but that the other papers of the meeting be published.

**Meeting Opened: 2.04 pm**  
**Meeting Closed: 4.26 pm**

**JE**

