

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 29 October 2007
Subject Council Meeting
Location Nottinghamshire County Council
Time 17:00
LSC office Nottinghamshire
Publication intent Internal

Present: Keith Stanyard (Chair)
Mick Brown
Elaine Clark
Milton Crosdale
Chris Hasty
Roger Hursthouse
Barbara McKenna
David Sadler
Mick Storey
Jane Urquhart
Deborah White
Pat Woodfield

LSC Staff: Nigel Jackson
Terry Laws
Paula Webber
Kathy White

Apologies: Stuart Anthony
Kate Harley
Jon McLeod
Jean Pardoe
Tom Stockwell

Item 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
The Chairman welcomed all present and introduced Cllr Jane Urquhart (City Council) who was attending her first meeting.

Item 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING
The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September were agreed as a true record.

Item 3. CAPITAL PROPOSAL BY WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE

Terry Laws reported that planning permission had now been granted for both the housing on the existing college site and the building of the new college. The LSC property team is broadly in favour of the submitted AIP but a further meeting is required to clarify some outstanding design and financial aspects.

The proposal will be considered at the Regional Board meeting on 8 November and subsequently the National Capital Committee meeting on 22 November.

The Chairman welcomed Asha Khemka, Tom Stevens, Tim Grant, and Peter Orton from West Nottinghamshire College and Colin Moses from RMJM (architects) to the meeting.

Asha Khemka outlined the aim and vision for the new college, explaining that the existing college is currently spread over a number of sites and the accommodation is dated and expensive to maintain. Rationalisation of the majority of the college's estate onto one campus will reduce the existing floorspace by 17.5% from 40-33,000sqm. In compliance with the new LSC guidance, an additional 10% of floor space has been allowed for the Atrium.

The college is planning for 12% student growth in the five year development period and has already seen a 7% growth increase this year. These figures are exclusive of Train to Gain recruitment.

Asha Khemka referred to the overall cost which has increased from £64m to £86m and explained that this was mainly due to sustainability issues and the increases in on-site levels and services and off-site infrastructure costs. However, even with these additions, costs are still within the project costs per sqm set down by the LSC.

In reply to a question from Roger Hursthouse regarding the cost increases, Asha replied that the original figures were put forward without any site investigations. The revised figures now represent the detailed position. Asha confirmed that all Section 106 issues have now been resolved.

Roger Hursthouse referred to the costs associated with the access roundabout and questioned why the LSC would be responsible for meeting these. Terry Laws stated that, Antony Worthy (Financial Support Manager) had advised the college to include this amount at this stage.

Terry Laws confirmed that the college was borrowing the maximum amount available. The ten year financial forecast indicates that the

college will contribute £24m with a £71m contribution coming from the LSC.

In response to a question from David Sadler regarding the robustness of the figures, Asha Khemka stated that these were the result of a rigorous assessment. Subject to approval it is expected that the construction of the new college will start in August 2008 for completion in December 2010.

Tom Stevens advised that evaluation of the sites will take place once the college submits the detailed proposal. The LSC will receive all surpluses from the disposal of land and buildings and the college is obliged to maximise the value of these sales. Assuming the land will be sold for housing, the Derby road site is currently valued at £5m.

Colin Moses briefly outlined the design of the new college which has been influenced by detailed analysis of curriculum requirements and dialogue with members of staff.

Milton Crosdale questioned the public access to the site and what provision had been made for security. Colin Moses replied that several CCTV cameras would be installed. Traffic lights on the MARR will control vehicular access and a bus stop will be located directly outside the college.

At this point, the Chairman thanked Asha Khemka and her team for the presentation and invited them to leave the meeting.

Item 4.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION ON CAPITAL PROPOSAL

Terry Laws advised that, without the final clearance of the technical and financial assessments, the Council was not technically in a position to approve the Application in Principle. However, in order to inform the Regional Board the Council was asked to:

- 1) confirm overall support for the project
- 2) confirm support for the educational case
- 3) recommend the project to the Regional Board subject to a revised financial assessment

Mick Brown advised that a series of meetings had taken place between the college and the LSC. The financial appraisal has been completed and falls within the LSC guidelines. Mick Brown assured Council members that the assumptions for student growth were realistic.

Roger Hursthouse reaffirmed his support for the project but expressed concerns regarding the significant rise in costs.

Deborah White referred to the size of the project and the ability of the college team to manage it. Mick Brown advised that the LSC now has a new set of procedures in place to prevent projects from going over budget. WNC has dedicated resources to the project by appointing Tom Stevens as the full time project manager. Mick Brown advised that the specification would be assessed as the work progressed should the project be close to going over budget.

Keith Stanyard summarised the discussion as follows:

1. Council members believe that the building of a new college is necessary and that Nottinghamshire would benefit significantly from having a 21c college in this area.
2. Council members are satisfied of the need for a new college based on student growth numbers.
3. Council members are satisfied that the existing facilities are inadequate.

Council members gave their consent to the project on the following conditions:

1. Council members recognise that this is a very large project and are pleased to see resources have been dedicated to project management. However, Council members believe that close monitoring of the project will be necessary.
2. Council members accept that the financial appraisals meet the LSC guidelines but were concerned to note the increases and would wish to see this area of work closely scrutinised.

Item 5. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED BY THE AGENDA

12 September - There were no matters arising from the minutes of 12 September not already covered by the agenda.

14 June - Council members were asked to submit the names of suitable people who may be interested in becoming members of the new Regional Council.

Item 6. DELEGATIONS TO REGIONAL BOARDS AND CONTINUING ROLE OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Council members received a copy of the Delegations to Local Councils and Regional Boards paper.

The Chairman confirmed that the Further Education and Training Bill had now received Royal Assent. The LSC will now progress with plans to establish new Regional Councils. Keith Stanyard advised that it was the view of the Regional Board that local councils should continue to inform discussions at regional level. Council members confirmed support for this approach.

Item 7. AREA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mick Brown presented the Area Director's report and drew attention to the following key issues:

- **School Sixth Forms** – For 2008/09 the SSF funding approach will be the same as that for FE colleges. LSC staff will be involved in direct planning negotiations with individual school sixth forms.
- **14-19 Plan** - This is being currently being compiled in conjunction with both the city and county local authorities. The plans will be a sub set of the Children and Young People's Plan.
- **OCT** - This will have a major impact on funding. In respect of TTG, Nottinghamshire colleges have been awarded only half of the provision on offer.
- **TTG** – Figures have not changed significantly due to the availability of data being disrupted by problems associated with migrating MI to the new system. However, Nottinghamshire's performance is better than any other area in the East Midlands. Mick Brown assured Council members that the Carter and Carter contract was being reviewed very carefully. A quarterly review of TTG will take place in November.

Nigel Jackson to provide a progress report on TTG for the next Council meeting.

- **Machinery of Government Changes** - Mick Brown referred to the uncertainties surrounding apprenticeships in the new structure. The publication of the LSC Statement of Priorities has been delayed and is now expected in late November. There is currently an embargo on what the priorities will be but it is expected that funding for apprenticeships will be paramount.
- **Accommodation Update** - Relocation figures for both the offices on Phoenix Park and NG2 Business Park have now been considered and the NG2 option is the most cost effective. Fifteen additional car parking spaces are being secured with Homebase. Relocation is currently scheduled for the end of February.

Item 8. POSSIBLE COLLEGE MERGERS IN GREATER NOTTINGHAM

Mick Storey and Jane Urquhart declared an interest

A joint meeting of the NCN and Castle Corporations took place on 25 October together with the Principal, VP and chair of SNC. A further meeting will take place in November to pursue merger options and create a one college model in Nottingham.

Keith Stanyard, Paula Webber and Mick Brown recently met with David Kissman and Nick Lewis at Castle College. A meeting with Geoff Hall and Christine Goldstraw is scheduled for 31 October. The proposal would be to dissolve all existing corporations and elect a new governing body.

It was reported that Castle College would not wish to see the college's capital programme disrupted by merger. It is expected that the detailed proposal for Maid Marian Way will be submitted in December. The new college block will be located at the top of the Maid Marian Way site and Clegg Construction have been appointed as developers. The college is now reconsidering its initial plans to sell the other half of the site to Cleggs for retail development. A decision will be taken early December. A proposal for development of Basford Hall is expected in 2008.

Milton Crosdale expressed concerns regarding the one-college model and the proposed relocation of Clarendon college which will concentrate all provision in the city centre. In reply, Mick Brown stated that Gedling would have to be included in the accommodation strategy of the newly merged college.

In response to a question from Deborah White regarding the timescale for the merger, Mick Brown replied that public consultation could take place early in the New Year with merger to follow in the Autumn of 2008.

Item 9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Council members received an updated copy of the Nottinghamshire LSC capital projects.

Item 10. IMPACT OF DEMAND LED FUNDING

Mick Brown drew attention to the spreadsheet accompanying this paper which highlights the potential effects of the new funding methodology and the impact on FE providers. Paula Webber advised that this analysis was based on 2005/06 figures and it is expected that applying the data for 2006/07 would show a much improved position.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 11 December, 5pm at Clarendon College followed by Christmas dinner in the Newstead Restaurant.