

JOHN WHEATLEY COLLEGE
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
CAPITAL AND ICT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Capital and ICT Committee held on Wednesday 5 December, 2005 at 5 pm, in the Alex Viola Suite (Room S/09), Easterhouse Campus.

1. Sederunt

Professor Arthur Allison (Chair)
Andy Woolley
Peter Craig
Ian Graham (Principal)
Martin Axford (co-opted member)
Russell Boyd (Associate Principal - ICT)
Robert McCaig (Student Representative)

Also in attendance

Alex Kirk (Depute Principal)
Alan Inglis (Assistant Principal)
Alan Sherry (Assistant Principal)
James Gow (Chief Finance Officer)
Mhairi McAdam (for recording purposes only)

2. Apologies

Andrew Macdougall

3. Declarations of Interest

A Woolley declared an interest in respect of item 8, as a result of his employment by Scottish Enterprise Glasgow and membership of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Property and Capital Investment Committee.

4. Terms of Reference

Members noted the terms of reference for the Capital and ICT Committee. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 7 members in attendance.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 September 2005

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 21 September 2005.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

Item 9 – Internal Audit Report – Facilities and Estate Management

The Principal informed members that at its last meeting of the Capital and ICT Committee it was previously indicated that the College would hire a Clerk of Works to manage the estate.

However after detailed consideration within the Senior Management Team it had been decided that this may not now be appropriate as the current procedures for the management of the Estates and Facilities functions are operating effectively. However if required the College will seek to engage external consultants to perform specialist tasks.

Item 11 – Estates Capital Formula Funding 2004-05

Members were asked to note that the Funding Council had accepted the College's report in respect of expenditure.

Item 14 – Learning and Skills Council Budget Cut

The Principal informed members that the College, in collaboration with the Principal of Glasgow Metropolitan College, had raised a formal concern with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and to the Association of Scottish Colleges (ASC) in respect of the 27.3% reduction in the level of funding provided to JISC by the Learning and Skills Council.

In response to questions the Chair highlighted the relevance of the work undertaken by JISC and the Principal reported that the College routinely accessed the expertise provided by the local regional support service. He also reminded members that the College was currently in receipt of JISC funding to further develop a digital document management system linked to the First Class Virtual Learning Environment.

Item 13 – Wireless Network for GELN Update

The Associate Principal informed members that there remained a few issues with Glasgow Housing Association in relation to placing of equipment on high rise flats and that this had delayed the roll-out of the wireless network. However he anticipated that this would be resolved in the near future. The Principal further informed members that clarification would be required in respect of the any potential insurance risks resulting from the placement of this equipment on such property and from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on any potential liability under the Radiation Protection (1992) Act.

Members noted this progress.

New Building Progress

The Depute Principal provided an update for members on the progress of the new East End campus. He highlighted that groundworks had now been completed and that work was progressing in order to complete some design details required for the construction drawings. He informed members that it was anticipated that the main contract would commence on 9 January 2006 with a proposed completion date of January/February 2007. He further informed members that it was anticipated that the contract would be ready for signing prior to the end of calendar year 2005 once Doig and Smith had conducted their review of all the necessary documentation.

Members thanked the Depute Principal for this update.

7 Minutes of the Project Management meeting held on 27 October 2005

At the date of the meeting this minute was not yet available. The Assistant Principal informed members that it would be placed on the agenda of the next scheduled meeting.

8 Wireless Network – Proposal for Feasibility Study

A Woolley reminded members that he had previously declared a conflict of interest with respect to this item, as he is currently a member of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Property and Capital Investment Committee.

The Principal informed members that with Professor Tom Wilson (Principal of Glasgow Metropolitan College) the College had written to the Chief Executive of the then Scottish Further Education Funding Council (SFEFC) to propose that, as part of the estates 'solution' for the city, the Council consider funding a pan-Glasgow Wireless Information and Communications Technology (ICT) network to support the activities of colleges and attached appendix 1 was the proposal for funding for a feasibility study. He further informed members that it was anticipated that the outcome of the bid would be known in early 2006.

In response to questions the Principal informed members that the College was aware of the possible security issues related to wireless networks however it re-assured that considerable progress had been made in improving the resilience of such systems. The Associate Principal reported that it was also possible to ensure that only 'approved' hardware had access to the resources of an identified wireless network and that if the College was to adopt the wireless solution steps would be taken to ensure that only authorised equipment would be able to log-on to the network.

The Depute Principal informed members that currently the College was proposing to use both wireless and hardwiring technologies in the new East End campus as it sought to combine both security and flexibility in its ICT network. He further reported that crucial College systems such as Student Records and Finance would be connected by hardwiring while the learning Hotspot and other learner areas would have a wireless connection.

Following discussion members noted the contents of the report and requested that the Principal inform them of the outcome of the bid.

9. The JANET Report

The Associate Principal spoke to his report informing members that appendix 1 was the JISC Annual Report for 2004/05. He proceeded to highlight the aim areas included in the annual report including:

- the provision of funding to Clydenet to provide a low bandwidth backup connection to Edinburgh;
- the development of the network and its applied services to harness technology to improve the learning experience;
- the increase in the number of adult and community learning centres connected to the network; and
- the support offered to members through the provision of services such as staff development and conferences

In response to questions R Boyd informed members that the College had been involved in discussion with JISC with regard to the connecting the new East End Campus to the network however there remained some issues to be resolved in terms of who was responsible for the costs of the exercise. The Principal informed members that it had recently been confirmed by SFC that the costs for this connection should be borne by JISC as part of its contract with the FE sector in Scotland.

R Boyd also highlighted that the current focus is now on the new SuperJANET5 project which is currently underway. This project is intended to provide a better service to establishments with increased bandwidth, improved reliability and resilience.

Members noted the contents of the report and its appendix.

10. Innovative Practice with e-Learning

The Associate Principal informed members on the importance of this publication from JISC. He reported that the document contained information on a number of pilot project which sought to use new technologies within a learning environment. These projects included the use of mobile phones and other PDA devices to support the learner. The pilot projects highlighted the need to develop learning/teaching approaches to include blended learning making more effective use of the range of the ICT equipment which was now available. However he cautioned that the proliferation of such devices resulted in increased security concerns and therefore it would be necessary to access how best they could be used on a case by case basis.

Members noted the Associate Principal's Report.

11. Closure

The meeting closed at 5.45 pm, with the Chair thanking all members for their attendance.

12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 1 March 2005 at 5 pm in Room S/09, Easterhouse Campus.