

# BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THURSDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2012



GATESHEAD COLLEGE

**Report:** Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8  
December 2011  
**Author:** Clerk to the Corporation  
**Action:** Approve  
**Status:** Open

**Present:** Robin Mackie (in the Chair)  
Susan Bickerton  
Keith Cann Evans  
Kevin Fitzpatrick  
Ivan Jepson  
Aziz Kouame  
John McElroy  
Ian Renwick  
Alan Reynolds  
Alex Rutherford  
Allan Steele  
Mark Taylor  
Richard Thorold

**In attendance:** Mick Brophy  
Jackie Doxford  
Judith Doyle  
John Holt  
Gwyneth Jones

## 1571 Welcome/Apologies

Robin Mackie welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Alex Rutherford, Support Staff Governor, who was attending his first meeting of the Board. Apologies for absence were received from Chris Macklin and David Mitchell.

The Chair invited members to declare any interests on any item on the agenda. No interests were declared at this stage in the meeting; however, members noted that should the direction of debate on any item on the agenda result in a potential conflict of interest, this should be indicated during the meeting. Members were also reminded to advise the Clerk of any changes to be made to the declaration of interests.

## 1572 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13 October 2011 were accepted as a correct record.

## 1573 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

**1574 Strategic Debate – International Strategy**

The Principal introduced a report and delivered a presentation on the development of an International Strategy for Gateshead College. The decline in public funding will result in many colleges having either to reduce expenditure or grow income or a mixture of both. Gateshead College's strategy is to grow wherever possible, to seek out opportunities as they arise and to act in an entrepreneurial manner at all times. The Principal commented that if colleges are to survive and to continue to grow then alternative sources of commercial income need to be identified and the balance between public and private/commercial income needs to move towards a 50/50 split. The current balance of income for Gateshead College is roughly 75% public to 25% commercial and the objective is to achieve a 50% ratio.

The College must ensure that it maximises the investments it has made in many of its specialisms and especially low carbon vehicle technologies. Developing the rationale for an International Strategy, the Principal indicated that he was seeking approval for: the implementation of a strategy to increase substantially the College's international education and training; and the establishment of a special purpose company as a wholly owned subsidiary to be the principal vehicle for the implementation of this international strategy.

The Board noted that the International Strategy proposed is extremely ambitious and its successful implementation would have a major impact upon the College, contributing to an 80% expansion in current business over a 10 year period. It would enhance the College's reputation and provide an opportunity to work with internationally renowned companies. The Strategy has been developed from a detailed and comprehensive analysis undertaken over recent months which has identified specific strengths in the College and related international opportunities. The analysis has also identified the key actions required to access these opportunities.

The Principal explained that entering international markets is complex; however, partnering with established local organisations, such as the Vocational Training Council, the largest provider of vocational education and training in the Hong Kong region will provide immediate market access, facilities and local presence. Representatives of VTC have visited Gateshead College and invited the Principal to visit them to discuss collaboration. A further means of accessing international markets is in partnership with businesses located in the North East. Existing customers such as Nissan and SEV are developing major presences in these emerging markets, and such presence and activities could be leveraged directly and by referrals to local partners.

In order to take forward this International Strategy, the paper proposed that a wholly owned subsidiary company is established. This Company would provide a focus for the identification of specific international opportunities, marketing and business development, including the development of partnerships, the sourcing of education and training, and the management of this education and training. It is envisaged that the company would implement a three-stage programme over five years. This programme will enable a managed expansion of activities, while allowing revenue to be managed at a very early stage. The first phase of activity would commence in January 2012 and would span an 18 month period followed by a review. In this phase, the Company would confirm target markets, initially in Europe, China and North America, and build partnerships with local providers and key authorities. The Company would commission curriculum development, delivery resources and materials from other parts of the College, as required. Over the five-year period, it is

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anticipated that the sourcing would entail a change in many areas of the College, contributing to a more outward looking and business focused culture.

Members noted that the implementation of an International Strategy will provide the College with a major opportunity to develop substantial new international business. The strategy will focus on specific product areas, particularly the skills required for the development of low carbon infrastructure: transportation, including electric vehicles; energy and construction. The College will develop partnerships to identify specific training and education needs, and deliver programmes that meet these needs. Such partnerships will include other colleges and providers, and individual businesses.

Commenting on the need for Gateshead College to get ahead of the game, a member expressed his wholehearted support for the proposal. Another Governor indicated support to increase business by 70% to 80%; he also commented on the wisdom of balancing caution with opportunity and the need for detailed costings and an exit strategy in the event that the venture proved not to be successful. The Chair of Governance and Search Committee commented that the paper was well-written with detailed analysis and indicated his support for the proposal for an International Strategy. He suggested that previous ventures which had not fulfilled expectations had not been as well researched. Another member commented that the proposal followed on from the intention to be an 'entrepreneurial college'.

The Principal indicated that SFA approval may be required depending upon how much the College wished to invest. If the investment is generated from private funds as surplus SFA permission is not required. The new Education Act may also change the regulatory requirements. He explained that the initial resource implications of the proposal were between £1m and £1.5m and indicated that a business plan would be brought to the Board if the proposal to proceed was approved. A member expressed support for the development of an International Strategy if it is handled appropriately. She commented on the consequences of similar ventures which had failed and emphasised the need to obtain necessary approvals. The College would need to be watertight on the communications around this because if resources were seen as being channelled away from the College, it could be seen as taking the eye off the ball in the local community.

Members enquired about the use of any surpluses from the proposed venture and suggested that they should be invested in the Gateshead College Foundation and also used to support local provision. A view was expressed that there is need to include Gateshead Council within the development proposals so that they can be aligned with worldwide town twinning arrangements and plans for the Gateshead 2030 Strategy. The Principal indicated that there would be a very co-ordinated message about re-investing profits in Gateshead and using them to support local students. Future Government strategies will result in less students being supported by central funds.

The Managing Director: Business, Innovation and Development explained that the curriculum needs to be developed to encourage both international and local inward investment. A Governor commented on the need for a business case which indicates the local benefits beyond the core business case to encourage businesses and other organisations to support the proposed development. In dealing with worldwide developments relating to low carbon technologies there is a need to ensure that companies participating are prepared to share their intellectual property and the College needs to pay attention to the 'credibility crossover'. The Principal commented on the need to be very careful and selective and indicated that it was probable that students would be taught in their home countries and not brought to the UK.

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The Chair enquired why a special purpose company was required to undertake the proposed development. The Principal indicated that such a development needs to be undertaken by a separate entity and not as a department of the College; past failures in other colleges have shown the need for clear separation.

#### **RESOLVED**

- i) to approve the implementation of an International Strategy for the College, as outlined in the Principal's paper**
- ii) to approve, in principle, the establishment of a special purpose company as a wholly owned subsidiary, to be the principal vehicle for the implementation of the international strategy**

### **1575 Regional Growth Fund**

The Managing Director, Business, Innovation & Development gave a presentation about the Regional Growth Fund (RGF). £6.3m RGF has been conditionally offered to Gateshead College subject to contract/due diligence; this levers a target £39m of other investment. The RGF 'spend' covers the period 3 October 2011 to 31 March 2014. Within the £6.3m there is £2.7m to develop the Test Track, £2m projects fund (industry/university/Zero Carbon Futures), £1m to deliver apprenticeships/training and £600,000 to cover SASMI Innovation centre operational costs and network development.

Over the 10 year plan to 2020/2021 the RGF plus leveraged investment totals £45m. RGF support of £2.7m for the Test Track will lever £390,000 from Nissan/Turbine BP with £2.6m GHC in kind equivalent to 10 years' Test Track staffing/operating costs. The £2m Projects Fund will lever £2m match funding from industry. Apprenticeships/training £1m RGF will lever £22m employers' match funding equivalent to 10 years apprenticeship salaries/training costs, £1m employers' match equivalent to training facilities and £360,000 Gateshead College/partners in kind (curriculum development and staffing). £600,000 RGF for SASMI Innovation Centre will lever £542,000 GHC in kind equivalent to office space/fit out, £2.9m GHC in kind equivalent to 10 years' SASMI staffing, £1.4m Nissan/AMAP in kind equipment and £5.6m industry/universities in kind equivalent to 10 years' staffing.

A diagrammatic presentation demonstrated strategic links and business connections. Members noted that the College's dedication to developing the Test Track is linked to the development of low carbon vehicles and trying to find a niche market for the College in the North East. There would be investment in the Innovation Suite in SASMI by universities, private research institutions.

The presentation also included a breakdown of the risks associated with the project, which provided information on the likelihood and impact of each risk and the scope for mitigation.

The Chair thanked the Managing Director, Business, Innovation & Development for providing the update and commented that there is much work to be done to leverage maximum benefit from the RGF.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the presentation**

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#### **1576 Board Membership**

The Clerk introduced a report which advised the Board of the election of a Support Staff Governor. In the election process for a Support Staff Governor held recently in the College, Alex Rutherford was unopposed. Alex Rutherford will therefore serve as Support Staff Governor for a term of two years ending on 30 November 2013.

**RESOLVED to approve the appointment of Alex Rutherford as Support Staff Governor for a term ending 30 November 2013**

#### **1577 College Self Assessment Report**

The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality introduced a report which provided an executive summary of the College's Self Assessment Report 2010/2011. A full draft version of the report had been considered by Academic Standards Committee on 23 November 2011 when members had recommended that the grades proposed should be accepted as the College performance for 2010/2011. It was noted that the Committee had agreed that Effectiveness of Provision, Capacity to Improve, Outcomes for Learners, Quality of Provision, Leadership and Management, Equality of Opportunity and Safeguarding should all be 'Outstanding: Grade1'. Considering Subject Sector Area Grades it was noted that Area 4.1: Automotive; Area 4.2: Engineering; Area 7: Service Industries; Area 8: Sport; Area 13: Education and Training; and Area 14: Preparation for Life and Work had been proposed as Grade 1. Area 5: Construction and Building Services and Area 6: ICT had been proposed as Grade 2 and Area 1: Health, Public Services and Care and Area 15: Business, Administration and Law had been proposed as Grade 3.

The Chair of Governance and Search Committee enquired whether action plans were in place for the two areas which had moved from Grade 2 to Grade 3. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality confirmed that there had been robust debate at Academic Standards Committee and indicated that the issue with Area 1: Health, Public Services and Care was that improved performance had not been sustained. In Area 15: Business, Administration and Law the balance of provision has changed and problems in some small aspects affect the whole outcome.

A member commented that the College should be proud of its achievements and said that the Board should recognise the work of the Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality and her Executive Team. The Principal said that the performance was good but not outstanding in every area and that the College needs to strive for outstanding performance across all areas. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality explained that standards are rising across the sector and so the bar is being raised nationally; however, Gateshead College would not settle for less than the best! The Principal commented on apparently better results published by other organisations and the questionability of some of the statistical methods used to achieve them.

**RESOLVED to approve the grades recommended by the Academic Standards Committee as the College performance for 2010/2011**

#### **1578 Internal Audit Annual Report 2010/2011**

The Director of Finance introduced a report which sought approval for the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2010/2011. It was noted that KPMG, the College's Internal Audit Service providers until 31 July 2011, had prepared an annual report on their work in accordance with the College's internal audit plan, which is designed to allow them to make a statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's risk

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management, control and governance processes. A copy of the Internal Audit Annual Report 2010/2011 was appended to the report. The Board was advised that the Annual Report had been considered and approved by Audit Committee at a meeting on 7 June 2011.

#### **RESOLVED to approve the Internal Audit Annual Report 2010/2011**

#### **1579 Audit Findings and Financial Statements Letter for the year ended 31 July 2011**

The Director of Finance introduced a report prepared by Baker Tilly, the College's Financial Statements Auditors, which summarised the key findings in connection with the audit of the College's financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2011. The draft Audit Findings and Financial Statements Management Letter for the year ended 31 July 2011 had been considered at a joint meeting of the Audit and Financial and General Purposes Committees on 1 December 2011. The joint meeting recommended that the Board approve the audit findings for the year to 31 July 2011 and the letters of representation for signature by the Chair and the Principal.

The Director of Finance explained that the Auditors were awaiting the final SFA funding reconciliations for 2010/11.

The Financial Statements Auditors had confirmed their unqualified audit opinion for the College's Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2011 and for the Regularity Audit. The audit was completed within the timescale agreed with auditors with the process going smoothly.

#### **RESOLVED**

- i) to approve the Audit Findings for the year ended 31 July 2011**
- ii) to approve the Letters of Representation in respect of the Audit of the Financial Statements and Regularity Audit for the year ended 31 July 2011 for signature by the Chair and the Principal**

#### **1580 Annual Report of Audit Committee 2010/11**

In the absence of the Chair of Audit Committee, a member of the Committee introduced the Annual Report of Audit Committee for the period 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2011. In accordance with the requirements of the Audit Code of Practice, the report is addressed to both the Board of the Corporation and to the Principal in his role as the Accounting Officer for the College. The report provides advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's systems of internal control and governance processes, and securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The report included details of the Committee's consideration of reviews conducted by the College's Internal Audit Service and the IAS Annual Report. Members noted that the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service reviewed and evaluated the College's processes in a number of business areas. Based on these evaluations the IAS had expressed the opinion that the College had in place adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage the achievement of its objectives. The Board was advised that Audit Committee had expressed its congratulations to the College staff for their work in achieving another excellent year in terms of an IAS report; all areas reviewed with the exception of Corporate Governance and Work Based Learning had received a 'good' report. Members of the Board noted that this had been another successful year building on the previous years' efforts. A member of Audit Committee expressed the view on behalf of all members of the Committee that the good standard was a result of the work of the

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Finance Team and commented on the confidence which Audit Committee had in John Holt, Director of Finance.

The report also included information on the consideration of the Audit Findings at a joint meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee and Audit Committee on 1 December 2011. The Financial Statements Auditors had confirmed their unqualified audit opinion for the College's Financial Statements for 2010/2011. The report also commented on the College's Risk Management Plan.

The Board noted that the key common theme to emerge from the report was that the College's auditors continue to regard the systems in place for the proper conduct of the College business to be sound in principle and in practice and the College has a satisfactory framework of internal control. The report concluded that on the basis of work undertaken by KPMG and Baker Tilly, Gateshead College has an adequate and effective system of internal control. In reaching this conclusion, Audit Committee recognises that the system of financial controls can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected within a timely period.

The Board thanked Chris Macklin, Chair of Audit Committee and his colleagues for their work.

#### **RESOLVED to approve the contents of the report**

#### **1581 Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2011**

The Director of Finance introduced a report which presented the final audited financial statements for the year to 31 July 2011 for Gateshead College and Amacus Ltd which had been approved by a joint meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee and Audit Committee on 1 December 2011. The financial statements, which consolidate the subsidiary companies, had been audited by Baker Tilly, whose findings were reported to the Board. Amacus Ltd continued to trade normally throughout the financial year to 31 July 2011. Gateshead College entered into a joint venture with Gateshead Council in 2010 to form the North East Apprenticeship Company Limited (NEAC). The company was registered on 12 February 2010. NEAC is undergoing a full statutory audit for the trading period 12 February 2010 to 31 July 2011 and the results of NEAC, in which Gateshead College is a 50% investor, were not included in the Gateshead College group consolidation on the grounds that they were immaterial.

Gateshead College Foundation was incorporated on 18 April 2011. This charitable organisation was established to provide financial support to students to ensure that their studies are not impacted by personal hardship. The College has provided £1m of start-up capital and has pledged to donate a further percentage of its surplus each year above a minimum threshold, to ensure donations from the Foundation remain unaffected. The Foundation committed to £48,601 2011/2012 tuition fee awards prior to 31 July 2011.

Members noted that the operating surplus for the year was £4,955,000 (compared with £3,494,000 in 2010) prior to the consolidation of its subsidiaries. The final outturn surplus for 2010/2011 was £2,424,000 (2009/2010 £5,000,000). During the year, £445,000 of restructuring costs were incurred (2009/2010 £340,000), and interest charges and other finance costs of £586,000 were also incurred (2009/2010 £892,000). The College has accumulated consolidated reserves of £29,021,000

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excluding pension reserve (2009/2010 £26,417,000 excluding pension reserve) and consolidated cash balances of £15,217,000 (2009/2010 £12,763,000). The College wishes to continue to accumulate reserves to fund further capital developments and to reduce long-term loans.

Pay expenditure excluding restructuring costs for the year was £18,811,000 (2009/2010 £17,993,000) Non Pay expenditure totalled £16,404,000 (2009/2010 £15,845,000). Depreciation charges were £2,285,000 (2009/2010 £2,485,000). At £6,108,000 (2009/2010 £2,878,000) operating cash flow is strong. During the year the College secured no additional short term borrowing but has repaid £415,000. The College has borrowings of £13,330,000. The size of the College's total borrowings and its approach to interest rates have been calculated to ensure a reasonable cushion between the total cost of servicing debt and operating cash flow. The margin was comfortably exceeded during 2010/2011.

The College continues to be classified as SFA Financial Category A and Outstanding for Financial Management under the Framework for Excellence. The Chair commented on the excellent financial results. He expressed thanks to the management team for achieving excellent results and in particular to John Holt, Director of Finance.

**RESOLVED to approve the College Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2011**

#### **1582 Financial Management and Control Evaluation**

The Director of Finance introduced a report which presented the completed Financial Management and Control Evaluation annual return for approval prior to its submission to the SFA. The document had been reviewed by the joint meeting of Audit and Finance and General Purposes Committee on 1 December 2011 which recommended approval of the gradings to the Board.

**RESOLVED to approve the Financial Management and Control Evaluation Document for signature by the Principal and submission to the SFA**

#### **1583 Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan 2011/2012**

The Director of Finance introduced a report which sought approval for the Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan for 2011/2012 prepared by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the College's new Internal Audit Service providers following an audit needs assessment. It was noted that the Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan for 2011/2012, a copy of which was appended to the report, had been considered and approved by Audit Committee on 1 December 2011.

**RESOLVED to approve the Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan 2011/2012**

#### **1584 Board Self Assessment Results and Action Plan**

The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality introduced a report which included an analysis of the tabulated results of the interactive Self Assessment exercise held on 13 October 2011 plus a trend analysis using the results from 14 October 2010. For the last two years, the Self Assessment process of Governors has followed the same framework and has therefore resulted in a comprehensive set of data, which allows for trend analysis from one year to the next.

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The outcomes from Self Assessment for both years have been analysed and form the basis of the Quality Improvement Plan. The Plan includes those responses which show either in Section 1, fewer than 80% agree with the statement, or in Section 2, the combined scores of Outstanding and Good fall below 100%. Those responses where there has been a decline in the level of response from 2009/10 to 2010/11 are also included.

There was discussion on how the Board should take the findings forward and the general view was that this should be an in year process with progress reviewed at each Board meeting and a summary report on the status of the plan at the year end. Members agreed to look at the findings and to provide the Clerk with suggested actions to bring about improvement. The Chair suggested that there should be a debate about Governors Self Assessment at the next Board of Governors Meeting on 9 February 2012.

#### **RESOLVED**

- i) to note the contents of the Quality Improvement Plan**
- ii) to make suggestions to the Clerk, on how the issues identified therein, should be addressed**

#### **1585 Acquisition of Tyneside Training Services**

***The report and the record of discussion on it are 'closed to public access' until such time as they are considered to be no longer commercially sensitive***

#### **1586 North East Apprenticeship Company**

***The report and the record of discussion on it are 'closed to public access' until such time as they are considered to be no longer commercially sensitive***

*Keith Cann Evans, John Holt and Judith Doyle declared an interest as Directors of NEAC*

*John McElroy left the meeting*

#### **1587 Entrepreneurial College Update**

The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality introduced a report which updated the Board on activities taking place to support the development of the Entrepreneurial College. The report outlined both developments to support the initiative within the College, and also in partnership with the other 'E4FE' Colleges.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report**

#### **1588 Principal's Report**

The Principal presented a report which advised the Board on recent developments in the College and highlighted items of particular interest. The report also included information about the recent Staff Roadshow and reported the official launch of Gazelle Entrepreneurs at the AoC Conference.

The Principal referred to the annual NECC dinner which had been hosted by Gateshead College. The dinner had been a great success. A spin off from the event was that it enabled the College's development of a relationship with Dame Kelly Holmes, who has expressed an interest in becoming a College Ambassador.

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**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report**

**1589 Report from Remuneration Committee**

The Chair of Remuneration Committee gave an oral report on the meeting of Remuneration Committee which had taken place on 19 October 2011.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report**

**1590 Property Strategy**

The Director of Finance introduced a report which provided an update for the Board on the Phase 2 Property Strategy. It was noted that the practical completion of the SASMI Centre had been achieved in early August and the final account had been provisionally agreed with Mansell. Members were informed that following careful cost control, the project is likely to be around £415,000 under budget despite the cost of having to work around the NEDL cable which crossed the site and delayed start to the project. It had been expected that the project would be around £150,000 over budget. It was noted that practical completion of Test Track had been achieved and the project will be brought in on budget. Figures showing the current financial position of the project were provided by the Director of Finance. The remaining grant will be used to support the first year of operation of the facility.

It was noted that work on the Construction Centre Phase 2 continues to go well. The project remains on budget and practical completion of the hub building is expected before Christmas 2011 enabling a College fit out in January 2012, for which a contribution of £100,000 has been secured from SFA, with relocation at mid February at half term.

The College has agreed the revised lease to take over the whole of the Academy Building at the International Stadium from Gateshead Council. The five rooms in the new stadium extension have also been completed and the College is working with the Council on the licence.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report**

**1591 Human Resources Annual Report 2010/2011**

The Principal introduced a report prepared by the Director of Human Resources which highlighted activities undertaken by the Human Resources Team for the year 2010/2011. Key performance indicators are used in the report to compare the College against the previous two years. The College had 442 FTE staff in 2010/2011 compared with 443 in 2009/2010; staff turnover increased from 5.6% in 2009/2010 to 11.4% in 2010/2011. It was noted that turnover was based on new benchmarks and would equate to 5% on the old benchmarks. Absence reduced from 3.7% in 2009/2010 to 3.5% in 2010/2011 and long term absence dropped slightly from 1.5% in 2009/2010 to 1.3% in 2010/2011. Grievance and disciplinary cases reduced from 6 in 2009/2010 to 3 cases in 2010/2011 due to improved general awareness created by HR surgeries and HR guidance. During 2010/2011 the College recruited to 177 posts; 115 of which were associates/casuals.

The College has achieved Silver status in the NE Better Health at Work Awards and is 'going for Gold'. The Principal highlighted that the HR Team were winners of the North East CIPD for HR & D Excellence through Rewards and Benefits, for the implementation of "iBenefit", beating John Lewis Partnership to the top spot. The

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Chair said that Sue Breadner, Director of Human Resources, and her team should be commended on their success.

#### **RESOLVED to note the contents of the report**

#### **1592 Health & Safety Annual Report 2010/2011**

The Principal introduced a report prepared by the Director of Human Resources and the Health and Safety Manager which updated the Board with regard to Health and Safety activities, issues and developments in 2010/2011 and highlighted priorities for 2011/2012. The report summarised the key points of the management of Health and Safety in the College during the year including training, health surveillance and workplace vetting. The report included details of insurance claims made against the College during the year.

Health and Safety metrics showed that the total number of accidents reduced by 24% to 54 in 2010/2011 (72 in 2009/2010); this includes students, staff, members of the public and contractors. Student accidents decreased by 33% to 38 in 2010/2011 (57 in 2009/2010). It was noted that College's incident levels amongst the student population are low compared to the AoC national average of 13.31 incidents per 1,000 students. However the rates have increased to 4.43 (excluding T2G) per 1,000 students compared with 6.72 in 2009/2010 and 2.28 (including T2G) per 1,000 students compared with 3.26 in 2009/2010. Accidents to staff increased by 15% to 15 from 13 in 2009/2010. This is the third successive year where an increase has been recorded and 53% of all staff accidents were slips and trips. The College's incident rate is currently 18.9 per 1,000 employees which is low compared to the national AOC average of 47.4 per 1,000 employees in 2009/2010. The increase in the number of accidents requires close monitoring and managing. However, it may be explained by the College's improved awareness of health and safety, the increase in staff numbers on the previous year and accident reporting being the best it has been.

It was noted that there had been 3 accidents reportable under RIDDOR during the year. One had been in the Apprenticeship Unit but occurred on an employer site and was recorded in the College but reported by the employer. An employee hurt his back within the welding area and following a full investigation suitable control measures have now been adopted. A learner from Automotive trapped his finger in a metal bending machine and this resulted in an HSE inspection which found that the College had fully complied with its legislative obligation; therefore no further action was taken.

The report set out the priorities for 2011/2012 which include: the implementation of the revised Health and Safety Policy, raising awareness of slips, trips and falls to reduce accidents and introducing a Compliance Inspection to confirm the College is fully compliant.

#### **RESOLVED to note the contents of the report**

#### **1593 Report of the Clerk**

The Clerk introduced a routine report which advised the Board of Governor activity and documents signed under seal since October 2011. It was noted that Mark Taylor and Abdul-Aziz Kouame were continuing to work through the NUS Student Governor Support Programme. A Development Session involving Mark, Aziz, Darren Heathcote and Emily Sargeant from Learner Services, Alex Rutherford, the new Support Staff Governor and the Clerk had taken place at Gateshead College on

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Tuesday 6 December 2011.

The definitive version of the AoC Foundation Code of Governance has been published and will be included in a Board agenda in the Spring Term 2012 after it has been considered by Governance and Search Committee.

**RESOLVED to note**

- i) **the contents of the report**
- ii) **the Corporation Seal was affixed to the Plugged in Places Transfer Agreement between (1) One North East and (2) Gateshead College and (3) Charge Your Car (North) Limited signed by Robin Mackie, Chair of the Corporation and Keith Cann Evans, Vice Chair of the Corporation on 1 December 2011**

**1594 Minutes of Committees:**

The Board received the minutes of the following Committees:  
Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 22 September 2011  
Academic Standards Committee held on 15 June 2011  
Joint Finance and General Purposes and Audit Committee held on 9 December 2010

**1595 Any other business**

There was no other business.

**1596 Date of next meeting**

The next Board meeting would be on Thursday 9 February 2012 commencing at 12.30pm.

**1597 Chair's Review of Business**

The Chair commented that there was a good trajectory in terms of business. He invited everyone to Christmas Dinner in the Greenhouse Brasserie.