

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 1ST MARCH 2011 at 11.00 a.m.

Present: Mr G R Baird, Mr M Hodgson, Dr J Johnston, Mr A R C Lane, Mr R Pope,
Mr C J P Watney

Apologies received: Mr C P Clementi

In attendance: Mr I F Dumbleton, Ms N Whitehead

In the Chair: Mr G R Baird

1685. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests.

1686. **Minutes (Parts I and II)** of the meeting held on 15th December were approved.

1687. Matters arising

Part I - Item 1678 (and previously 1667): A meeting with HDC and WSCC officers to discuss possible road safety enhancements and the college's green travel plan had taken place. A further meeting with HDC and the hospital was proposed.

Part II - Item 1678 (and 1663): Part II minutes ((Criterion h) Information considered to be commercially sensitive)

Part I – Item 1680 Management Accounts: The Principal reported that the teachers had rejected the 0.75% pay offer (accepted by support staff). The employer side had offered no improvement, considering this generous in the light of the subsequent funding announcements and the union side was once more considering the offer.

The college had paid off £190k of the capital loan.

Part 1 - Item 1681 – Operating Plan: The Principal reported that there was no further clarity on the application of minimum contract values for Adult Education and Work-Based Learning in what press reports suggested was an area of dispute between DBIS and DfE with the latter holding out for exemption for SFCs. The College was planning a number of approaches so that they could adapt according to the decision once reached.

Part II minutes ((Criterion h) Information considered to be commercially sensitive)

1688. Report from the Premises Sub-Committee

The Chair reported the progress in signing off the snagging issues in the John Dew building which it was hoped to complete in the Easter break as well as the upgrading of the electricity provision and purchase of goods for the Home Economics area. Work was also proposed to improve a number of fire escape routes from parts of the college.

1689. **Report from the Joint Staff Governors Consultative Group**

Paper: Minutes of the meeting held on February

The Clerk reported that the Committee had considered the annual E&D report and welcomed for the first time a report covering disability as well as gender, race, postcode and previous school. In addition to the usual Premises report members were interested in the Governing Body's recent discussions of wider issues such as HE fees and EMA policy, funding and curriculum issues and the representations made both directly and through representative bodies where concerns were felt. The Vice Chair of the Governing Body reported that discussions had been positive including members' first consideration of the new Managing Change policy which sought to put compulsory redundancy in the context of other measures and as a last resort. Members recognised that the timetable changes, whilst valuable in providing much needed additional capacity for the college, were of concern to some staff in extending the day though this had been kept to a minimum at 15 minutes.

1690. **Management Accounts**

Paper: Financial Report for the period from 1 August 2010 to 31st January 2011

The Director of Finance explained that, at the end of January, the college's financial position was robust with favourable variances on income (ahead of forecast by £139k), pay expenditure (favourable variance of £28k) and non-pay expenditure (favourable variance of £47k) contributing to a current surplus of some £171k. The current ratio was healthy at 1.76:1 and cash days in hand were 72. At 69.4%, staff costs as a percentage of income were better than the 72.5% forecast although this figure tended to rise as the year progressed due to the cumulative impact of pay increases which take place in September. The key income variance was additional income for the growth in student numbers. The increase in pension costs had been more favourable than expected as had capital expenditure on the Food and Nutrition area.

1691. **Mid-Year Update of the Financial Forecast for 2010/11**

The Director of Finance anticipated that, on the basis of the mid-year forecast, the surplus for the current year would be some £271k, £194k ahead of budget.

Part II minutes ((Criterion h) Information considered to be commercially sensitive)

Recommendation: The Governing Body should approve the Mid-Year Update Forecast at its next meeting.

1692. **YPLA confirmation of financial health category**

Paper: Letter of 11th November from the YPLA

The Director of Finance reported that the YPLA had formally confirmed the college's assessment of its financial position for 2009/10 as outstanding.

1693. **Funding for 2011/12**

Paper: Briefing on anticipated position of Sixth Form Colleges and Collyer's

Part II minutes ((Criterion h) Information considered to be commercially sensitive)

1694. **Managing Change Policy**

Paper: Managing Change Policy & Procedure 2011

Members noted the purpose and content of the policy including the proposed amendments following initial consultations with college staff including trade union representatives. Members were invited to submit any detailed comments to the Clerk following the meeting which could be taken into account in producing a revised draft to reflect also any further comments from trade union representatives. It was

considered important to agree a policy in which governors had confidence given its potential importance in difficult times. Subject to the comments received, members felt the policy might require further discussion in draft form at the next Governing Body meeting with final approval potentially in the summer term.

1695. Committee membership

The Chair outlined the key changes proposed arising from the imminent departure of both Professor Clive Behagg and Mr Robert Pope which would mean the Vice Chair Elect, Mr Colin Eley joining both F&GP and Q&S. It was agreed that the Nominations Committee would be better placed to discuss Committee membership in the light of immediate and likely changes to the Governing Body.

1696. Any other business

The Clerk reported on the latest position regarding the review of governance and the subsequent Code being drawn up by the Association of Colleges (AoC). This sought to encapsulate governance best practice on a 'comply or explain' basis and might in future have implications for the Instruments & Articles (on which no further draft had been forthcoming). A briefing by AoSEC on the 8th March to be attended by the Chair, Vice Chair Elect and Clerk might enable a further report to the Governing Body at their next meeting before its intended introduction in the Summer.

1697. Meeting Assessment

The meeting had been useful in updating members on the funding position and the college's proactive responses to the challenges facing the education sector with a view to maintaining a high quality offer for students and supportive environment for staff.

1698. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 15th May at 11.00 a.m.(following Premises Sub-Committee at 9.30a.m.)

The meeting ended at 1.10p.m.

Chairman

Date

NCW 6/03/11