

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER
MINUTES OF
THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 14th MAY 2018 at 16.15pm

Present: Mrs Sally Bromley, Mr Tom Cox, Mrs Patrice Mantey, Mrs Helen Smith,
Apologies received: Miss Ann Donoghue, Mr Sam Uzzell, Mr Robert Yorke,
In attendance: Mr Ian Dumbleton, Ms Andrea John, Mr Dan Lodge, Mr Steve Martell,
Dr David Skipp, Ms Nicola Whitehead
In the Chair: Mrs Helen Smith to 16.25pm; Mrs Patrice Mantey thereafter

2218. **Declaration of interests** None

2219. **Minutes (Parts I and II) of the meeting held on 6th March 2018 were approved.**

2220. **Matters arising**

Item 2207: The Finance Director reported on the figure for staff costs as a percentage of recurrent income (i.e. that from ESFA funding) and how this compared across the S7 colleges. Collyer's costs fell in the middle of the range, slightly below the mean. **(Action: Clerk to circulate details).**

Item 2208: Further to the Committee's interest in the rise in LGPS pension costs, the Finance Director explained that consultation with SFCA suggested that the seemingly high costs for Collyer's could be down to the age profile of the College's members. There was no appeals process which left the College with little option but to focus its efforts on negotiations prior to the next review through early contact with the actuary. Members asked whether it would be advisable to reduce the pension surplus and the possible timescale for doing so. **(Action: Finance Director to explore).**

Item 2210: The Finance Director explained that the car parking charge for students had been discussed further by SMT who had decided no change.

Item 2211: Sports Hall: (*Paper circulated in advance of the meeting*) The Principal reported that the refurbishment works to the Sports Hall classrooms to address class size and ventilation were now anticipated to cost £88k. This reflected a decision to include air conditioning rather than more disruptive and costly changes to the windows with less certain improvements in temperature. As such two contracts were envisaged, with the partition and related works recommended to be undertaken by West Sussex Joinery and Comfort Environmental installing the air conditioning. Ongoing maintenance would be carried out by Comfort Environmental as an extension of their current maintenance contract.

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved the budget of £88,159 (incl VAT) and the award of contracts as proposed.

The Principal reported that the College had been unsuccessful in receiving any **CIF funding for 2018/19**. However two local Sixth Form Colleges had received substantial funding. She was therefore keen to ensure that an effective bid was made in the next CIF round expected in Autumn 2018 with the Design Technology block the potential focus.

With regard to GB1, a letter had been received from the architect to which a reply would be sent shortly. As with the contractor, the dialogue was welcome and no further action currently proposed.

[16.25 Mrs Patrice Mantey joined the meeting]

Item 2212: The Finance Director reported that the S106 money had not yet been received which it was understood was owing to governance procedures at WSCC. The next meeting of the trustees on 18th June would provide an opportunity to discuss its treatment in the light of any developments.

In respect of **lettings**, the Principal reported that the music lesson arrangements with West Sussex Music were now underway with further ideas being progressed on how the College could accommodate them further from September 2018.

Item 2214: The Finance Director reported that the additional cost of the recent **teachers' pay award** beyond that budgeted was c. £5k owing to the additional increases offered on points 1 to 6 as well as the 1% pay rise. Members noted that some colleges with younger workforces had been harder hit.

The Principal reported that confirmation had been received that the College was not obliged to publish its gender pay report given that it did not meet the threshold on staff numbers. That said she had still published the report on the college website but not uploaded it to the national website.

2221. **General Data Protection Regulations: Action Plan**

Paper: Draft GDPR Action Plan

Members noted the updated College documentation to reflect the changes in data protection law when the new GDPR regulations became valid from 25th May 2018. The Principal explained that the College Data Protection Policy and Use of Computers Agreement had been updated with the CCTV code of practice separated out and amended to include body-held cameras. The GDPR action plan showed the College was well on track. Asset registers had been completed for all college areas including curriculum, registry, HR and governance to ensure no gaps in preparedness and training would be rolled out over the summer. The Privacy Notice followed SFCA advice and had been shared with stakeholders with a message to staff and students in the bulletin and an e-mail to parents via e-mail to say where they could access the notice. GDPR had been added to the College External Risks as well as the internal risk assessments of all key areas of the College and would be considered again at the next meeting of the Risk Management Group on 22nd May.

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved the revised Data Protection Policy and Use of Computers Agreement.

2222. **Copyright Policy**

Paper: Copyright Policy

The Deputy Principal explained that this was a new policy intended to ensure that the College complied with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 which was the primary law which protects intellectual property rights in the United Kingdom. Its target audience was principally staff. The policy complemented the advice provided by individual subject areas with regard to plagiarism and coursework, the EPQ tracking documentation and the Library's online guidance on referencing.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the new Copyright Policy at their next meeting and agree delegation of future review of the policy to the F&GP Committee.

2223. **Pay Policy**

Paper: Pay Policy

The Principal explained that changes to the policy were relatively minor. In section 4 there were additions for the purpose of clarity concerning pay progression on the main teachers' scale and Responsibility Allowances. Section 5.3 referenced the Support Staff Standards Payment, a nationally agreed payment negotiated annually by the SFCA through the National Joint Council (NJC). The SSSP had been introduced at Collyer's by the Principal in 2015. Section 6 v) referenced unconsolidated payments which could be made to staff at the Principal's discretion for particular work e.g., in 2017/18, four Heads of Subject received additional AP1 payments for one year only for preparing teaching and assessment materials and liaising with Guangya School in China. In

response to questions about potential flexibility in the event of skills shortages, the Principal explained her preference for the parity provided by following nationally agreed pay agreements. A job evaluation panel did allow staff to apply for and gain scale increases where this could be justified.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the revised Pay Policy at their next meeting.

2224. **LGPS Discretions Policy**

Paper: LGPS Discretions Policy

The Finance Director explained that LGPS regulations afforded scheme employers some discretionary powers and required employers to make decisions about the application of these powers (which did not relate to contractual issues). The College was required to formulate, publish and keep under review a Statement of Policy on how it would use these discretions. The College needed to consider the cost implications of any discretions it decided to allow in relation to maintaining and recruiting a motivated and professional workforce. To-date the College had been more likely to exercise discretion with regard to flexible retirement on which there were separate procedures. Asked how the College would ensure fairness if looking at discretions on a case by case basis, the Finance Director explained that documentary evidence would help guide consistency. Dissemination of the policy would be via the college intranet as usual. The Principal explained that she sought to send an e-mail alert to staff on policy developments on a regular basis. Those related to staff would be shared with the union group with some more notable changes such as the GDPR meriting more concerted publicity and training.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the new LGPS Discretions Policy at their next meeting and agree delegation of future review of the policy to the F&GP Committee.

2225. **Staff Overseas Travel Policy**

Paper: Staff Overseas Travel Policy

The Principal explained that the new Staff Overseas Travel Policy was necessary due to an increase in the number of staff who might travel overseas on international student business. The policy aimed to ensure consistency of approach regarding, for example, booking transport and accommodation, expenses and cover for normal working responsibilities during the period of absence from college. Members asked about the level of spend for such trips and whether any budget limits were set or guide prices/ceilings given which they considered advisable. The Principal suggested an average cost per trip of c. £4k whilst noting that this varied according to length, destination and nature of visit i.e. whether to see agents, schools or attend fairs. **(Action: i) Principal to bring illustrative figures to next meeting; ii) Acting Chair to share exemplar policy to illustrate how cost guides/ limits could be set.)**

Recommendation: That, subject to consideration of the potential amendments discussed, the Governing Body approve the new Staff Overseas Travel Policy at their next meeting and agree delegation of future review of the policy to the F&GP Committee.

2226. **Staff Development Policies**

Papers: Staff development policy, Performance management and appraisal scheme, Probation policy and Staff capability policy

The VP (Q&C) explained that the usual three-yearly review of the policies had been brought forward by up to 9 months to enable related policies to be considered together in the new HR-focussed F&GP meeting early in the summer term. Across all the policies, the amendments were largely cosmetic and to correct small points of detail (e.g. job titles, names of other policies). There were no legislative changes that needed to be reflected and the SFCA had been consulted. The policies addressed in different ways the risk of staff underperformance and how to best develop staff to achieve their potential.

Asked how they would be made aware of any capability issues with regard to senior postholders, the Clerk explained the Chair's role in relation to appraisal of the Principal and Vice Principal (and Clerk) as set out in the Scheme of Delegation. This was reported at least annually to the Governing Body via F&GP and would be increased were there any difficulties. The probation arrangements also broadly followed those for staff which differed between teaching and support staff. The Principal explained that she had instituted new measures shortly after her appointment requiring staged reports at 2, 5 and 8 months for teachers to allow for review over an academic year as per the norm in the sector. For support staff a six-month period usually sufficed but in both cases extensions could be allowed though would not be considered if a member of staff had not demonstrated the promise of meeting the requirements. It was sometimes possible to expedite decisions in consultation with the member of staff.

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved the Staff Development Policy, Performance Management and Appraisal Scheme, Probation Policy and Staff Capability Policy.

2227. HR report

Papers: Summary paper, KPIs, Staff utilisation report, Student retention report and SMCG meeting note of 23.3.18

The Principal reported on:

a) KPIs

Governors noted that applications for 18/19 might be more favourable than anticipated given the 'demographic dip' of c. 100 students with a possible reduction in student enrolments of only 50. The demographics were expected to come back in favour from 2019. 98% of staff were now at the appropriate Stage 4 of the appraisal cycle and lesson observations were on track. Two members of staff were on informal capability. There would be coherence between the College's appraisal and self-assessment processes.

The Principal's additional report on student retention was welcomed by members as an aid to understanding the recent and potential impact on funding. In addition to its drive on poor attendance, the College was following up on students' reasons for leaving. At the early stage of the term this was often because the student had enrolled at more than one institution, for example pending a decision to stay at their school or awaiting news on a possible apprenticeship. Of most interest was in-year retention (i.e. post-enumeration) as this influenced the retention factor which affected funding. The College had identified a problem in terms of non-transfer of the key learning aim where assigned to a subject which was then dropped leading to a loss of funding. The Information Services Manager was now making additional reports to ensure no repetition of the problem. Future reports would also look at course retention as well as between-year retention.

In an effort to sustain progression to a second year, the College's special cases list already sought to prevent dropping out over the summer holidays. This might also be mitigated by the loss of the AS qualification if students chose to stay to secure a formal qualification. Distance to travel did not appear to be an issue but subject reviews did suggest concerns around workload and academic ability which could possibly be addressed through additional support. The College would also look at average GCSE score to see if some groups were more vulnerable to leaving. Members applauded the College's efforts to be as smart as possible in addressing retention both for the sake of helping students prepare for the future and to minimise loss of funding. The Finance Director confirmed that he took account of the net retention figures for budgeting.

- b) **The Staff Utilisation Report**, reviewed by SMT and the Information Services Manager on a regular basis, was welcomed as an indicator of cost efficiency as discussed at the recent finance training. The Principal explained ongoing action to keep payroll costs no higher than 72% of income. There had been careful management of teaching staff costs over the past three years through the change in the curriculum offer, though also through some increase in class sizes. Whilst still lower as a percentage of income than teaching staff costs and similarly carefully managed, support staff costs had increased to address the higher number of students.

The Principal described the predictions going forward as modest but sensible. Whilst higher staff: student ratios meant greater efficiency, it was in some ways regrettable. The aim was for staff to be deployed up to their tariff of 26 hours (with workshops taking up any spare time) and for class sizes to be 20+ (NB no standard size as primary schools) with remission commensurate with responsibilities. Class sizes had implications for accommodation needs with new builds addressing the demand for larger classrooms. Recommendations from a working group had to sought to address staff workloads and efficiencies through, for example, a central service for trip payments.

Members noted the spreadsheet data showing little surplus overall as well as the deployment and class size per subject to help demonstrate where the College was most/least efficient. This was a live document which would continue to inform next year's modelling of deployment, allowing transparency in discussion with subject/faculty heads. Clearly there was also a case for providing a choice of subjects. In response to questions, the Principal confirmed that educational research suggested that class size was a minor factor in achievement although too small a class could work against you. Remission was also considered proportionate.

- c) **Meeting of Staff Management Consultative Group (SMCG):** The notes of the latest meeting on 23rd March reflected discussion of non-lesson based contact time and Directed Time for PT teaching staff. Concerns had also been expressed about new internal learning walks being a form of lesson observation, Library staff dealing with mental health and first aid issues outside college hours and whether PT staff were expected to run workshops (which they were not). The Principal explained that a directed time document covered issues such as parents' evenings better to accommodate PT staff.
- d) **General:** The Principal drew attention also to the recent SFCA HR/Employment Update available on the Governance Sharepoint. This included advice and guidance on the Gender Pay Gap, GDPR and Gender Identity.

2228. Staff Welfare Statement

The Principal explained that, following the last F&GP discussion of the Staff Welfare Statement, she had included a grid outlining the benefits offered, the number of staff accessing the benefit and indicative costs. The Staff Welfare Statement would be considered by the SMCG on 18th May, with particular reference to the question raised by F&GP committee members as to what was valued by staff so that limited budgets could be targeted effectively. It was recommended that in future this statement be reviewed annually by SMT under the College's Scheme of Delegation.

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved the latest Staff Welfare Statement subject to any agreed changes proposed by the SMCG and agreed to recommend the delegation of future review of the statement to the SMT given its detailed operational nature.

2229. Governance Quality Framework and Meeting assessment

Members considered the papers helpful and yet usefully succinct. The full agenda was considered to have been addressed efficiently in under two hours, helped in part by the absence of several members though regrettable in itself. Mrs Mantey and Mrs Smith were thanked for stepping in as Chairs in the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair.

2230. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday 28th June 2018 at 16.15 p.m.

The meeting ended at 17.50 p.m.

Chair.....

Date

NCW 17/05/18