

## THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

### MINUTES OF THE ESTATES SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD ON TUESDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2021 at 16.00 (by Zoom)

- Present: Mr Tom Cox, Mr Ian Dumbleton, Mr Martin Emery, Mr Graham Lawrence, Mr Dan Lodge, Mr Steve Martell, Mr Eric Williamson
- In attendance: Mr Stephen Duffy (HNW Architects: *Agenda items 4 5, 6a and b/ Mins 4 -6b*); Mr Robert Hardwick (Project Manager-PM), Ms Nicola Whitehead (Clerk)
- In the Chair: Mr Graham Lawrence

*The Chair welcomed Eric Williamson to his first meeting of the ESC and thanked him for all the time he had already devoted to the preparatory work for the Shelley Building before the meeting. Mr Williamson introduced himself as a Chartered Surveyor by profession outlining his wealth of development experience and current project management work. All present confirmed they were content with the information received, its relevance to strategic priorities and what was being asked of them prior to the start of discussions. The key items would be the Principal's new Property Strategy, the Shelley Building preparations and the post-project reviews.*

1. **Declaration of interests** None
2. **Minutes (Parts I and IIa and b)** of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were approved. Members noted too the extract from the minutes of the December Governing Body reflecting decisions on estates issues since that last meeting.

#### 3. **Matters arising:**

**Item 5a:** The Clerk confirmed that the Chair had had sight of the (albeit brief) feedback from the previous CIF round and this was included on the Governance and Property Committee SharePoint sites for reference.

#### 4. **Property Strategy 2020-2032**

*Papers: Property Strategy 2020-32*

The Chair explained that the Strategy was for consultation, not formal endorsement by the ESC, prior to consideration by F&GP and the Governing Body (where Governors would be asked to approve it). The Principal explained that the new strategy was also going through a wider process of consultation with staff and students. The aim was to take a longer-term view to consider the full 12-year period up to the College's 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of foundation in 2032 whilst looking in detail at the period 2020-23 and would be reviewed again in summer 2023.

The ESC considered the phased plan with stages of **immediate and future new builds with some interim refurbishment projects**. The updates on the previous HNW masterplan included the new site for the Nursery to enable the Shelley Building and the loss of an auditorium and possible accommodation block for international students. Plans for a **new teaching block and Sports Hall with attractive outside space**, building on the former Grammar School quad model and the heritage of Collyer's, combined with a modern, open vision were designed to enhance the campus environment and address any competition from nearby schools and colleges in terms of facilities. (They also suggested at least a hiatus in progressing a second canopy).

In all, the projects might cost c £12m (at current costs) with inevitable demands for external funding from sources such as the ESFA, DfE, Mercers and S106 as well as internal funds.

Questions focussed on the College's sustainability plans including the wish to be an 'emerging' college in 2021 and a 'leading' college by 2023 under the Climate Action Roadmap for FE colleges. In doing so, Collyer's would be working collaboratively with other local colleges. Contributory factors to reducing the College's carbon footprint included the replacement of boilers and a reduced reliance on gas. The new ESC co-optee commented on the emerging technologies to assist in this journey including increasingly efficient ground source heat pumps, and a move away from steel and concrete in builds towards timber and modular approaches. He recognised the challenges however presented by the College's older buildings. Members saw the Shelley Building and further expansion plans as an opportunity to move towards net zero emissions and demonstrate the College's commitment to sustainability to its students and the wider Horsham community.

Members welcomed the Estates Manager's report covering the College's new Sustainability Committee which would be agreeing ways in which the College community could protect the environment and raise awareness about climate change.

Members recognised that the plans would mean the loss of some green space albeit that this would be to allow for a much-improved sports offer, both inside and out. Sport England would naturally have an interest in the development but, it was hoped, would recognise the improvements (through e.g. additional facilities and larger more flexible pitches plus possible potential to address disused facilities) within a coherent plan shared with the Horsham District Council given the greater potential for wider community use. The Nursery move would be the first test although this was moving to an area with current limited use for sporting events given the poor drainage.

In summary the Chair considered the new Property Strategy an excellent document in providing a well-researched and clear vision and a basis for future detailed plans, coherent with the College's overriding Strategic Plan and the new Finance Strategy also to be discussed by F&GP.

## **5. Shelley Building Project**

*Papers: Draft Nursery lease and constraints plan*

The Principal explained that a largely verbal update was necessary given the fast-moving development of planning for the new Shelley Building. Following a hiatus whilst awaiting confirmation of the TLCF funding, numerous meetings had taken place with HNW, the Nursery and ESC members.

The Nursery move was an essential first step and a meeting that day with the owner had reinforced that progress was being made. Comments proposing only small amendments to the lease were promised by mid-March and the Nursery's financial adviser was due to provide advice within a few days. Three possible construction companies had been identified including one suggested by HNW, to provide a modular building. Some fine-tuning of the orientation of the Nursery building was being considered to inform the planning application. Taking account of this and a potential 4-month project build, it seemed unlikely that the College could start construction of the Shelley Building until early October. Members noted this might mean consideration could be given to a modular approach since much design and building work could be started offsite to coincide with the Nursery build (so that, ideally, the Shelley Building would be completed by September 2022).

In response to questions, the Principal clarified that the leasehold arrangement was proposed for 15 years. The Nursery owner would decide on the building contractor and design subject to sign-off by the College with regard to size and design as covered in the Constraints plan proposed by HNW. The rent had yet to be decided in consultation with the Trustees of the Collyer Endowment taking account of the College's provision of (standalone) services to the site and parking. Access would be from the main car park only. The College's Project Manager

commented that e.g. transformers for increased electricity supply were notoriously expensive and had a long lead time. It was agreed that more refined costings for the provision of services might usefully be ready for the Trustees meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. *(Action: HNW and Principal)*

Turning to the appointment of the College's joint Project Manager (PM)/ Quantity Surveyor (QS) for the Shelley Building, the Principal explained the preparatory work using an NHS framework appropriately adapted to ensure an effective basis for the tender, which he had agreed with the Chair. 5 companies from the 6 invited had provided a written submission followed by participation in an interview with a panel of four (ESC Chair, ESC co-optee, Principal and Deputy Principal). The companies ranged in size and location, all factors which were taken into account alongside other key criteria. The process was believed to have been robust and effective and to have benefited greatly from the new co-optee's input and expertise. The Principal had filed all the relevant papers from the process.

The Chair reported that one firm had stood out in terms of the criteria – to include expertise and price - and recommended the appointment of BAQUS who had already worked successfully with the College on the recent Digihub. (Indeed the panel had thought there might be useful scope for and benefit in a longer-term relationship in due course.) Some fine-tuning of costs e.g. to take account of excluded items was still needed but the total sum was still expected to come within the Principal's delegated authority of the £75k incl VAT. As such the usual sign-off of professional services by the ESC as delegated under its terms of reference was all that was required with a report only to the forthcoming F&GP Committee.

**Resolved: The ESC approved the appointment of BAQUS to provide PM/QS services for the Shelley build.**

*Action: i) Principal to arrange first meeting with BAQUS to discuss the immediate priorities for planning (to inform e.g. build programme, risk assessment, design, tender process etc);*

*ii) Clerk to consult subsequently with members on a potential additional meeting (before June) as required.*

## **6. Progress Updates:**

*Papers: October '20 Estates and Project Managers' reports;*

**The Deputy Principal reported that:**

### **a) Social space**

#### **i) Canopy**

The Canopy had been completed in mid-February, creating valuable outdoor social space (particularly helpful in supporting social distancing during the Covid pandemic, replacing social space lost with the development of the Digi-Hub and meeting students' representations through the RCU).

Members noted that a full evaluation of the various canopies available on the market had been made and feedback obtained from other independent users prior to placing the contract. The project had been completed smoothly with both contractors and the Architect performing well. The total project outturn was £53k against the budget of £52k (All figures rounded incl VAT).

The Chair sought some clarification on the dates within the Appendix A project management tracking form and was reassured by the Principal's confirmation that he had now been able to sign this off in person.

## ii) Duckering Hall

Additional refectory facilities had been provided in the Duckering Hall to include table and seating and a cold food outlet ready for the return of students from 8<sup>th</sup> March. He recorded thanks to the Estates manager and IT Support for their work in terms of furniture and facilities.

## b) Digihub

In spite of some of the challenges (delays in the glass supply chain -owing to Covid-19- and an asbestos discovery), the end product was much valued. The contractor had generally performed well with the exception of the louvre design. The total project outturn had been £458k against a budget of £444k (incl. VAT) due to additional costs for works and fees.

HNW added that some of the communications issues had been taken up with Stirland. The latter were keen to address any outstanding issues including the louvres and were indeed on the College site that day to that end.

The Chair commented that the lessons learned had already helped inform the Shelley preparations and would continue to do so. In particular, the budget needed to be firmly established at the outset and adhered to with clear reporting. The App A and PPR were also important mechanisms for monitoring projects. The Clerk and PM were thanked for their contributions to the reports.

*[17.40 Mr Duffy left the meeting]*

## c) GB1:

### **Part IIa minutes - Criterion h): Information considered to be commercially sensitive**

- d) **CIF 2021/22:** Bids had been submitted for two projects with the support of a company, Synergy, who had been helpful in advising on the approach. Decisions were expected in the 'Spring' though delays might be expected so possibly May. The two (usefully separate) bids covered: i) the replacement of the two main boilers at a cost of £170,000. and ii) improvements to the College's perimeter security at a cost of £120,000.

Members agreed that, if successful, the use of Appendix A for monitoring would be appropriate to the scale of the project. In terms of approvals, the sums involved suggested Governing Body budget and contractor approval for the boiler and F&GP approval for the security in spite of the fact that the projects were relatively small and would currently be expected to be largely funded by the ESFA. The ESC would receive a report on progress at its June meeting, or before if an earlier meeting was arranged. The Clerk commented that such projects, combined with improved project management procedures, might be helpful in further informing levels of delegated approval and the College's procurement processes which were currently being fine-tuned in advance of review of the financial regulations in the summer.

## 7. **Report from the Health and Safety Committee:**

*Papers: Minutes of the H&S Committee of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and associated H&S Officer's report*

The Deputy Principal reported on the recent H&S Committee meeting, at which the main item of discussion had been a new lockdown procedure to be further considered by the Disaster Recovery Group. The H&S Manager commented too on the recent Nursery fire – owing to a faulty heater – but which thankfully had resulted in no personal injury. Temporary accommodation was being provided pending the new arrangements.

## 8. **AoB** None

9. **Date of the next meeting:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 16.00 but see min 5 above re probable earlier meeting to be advised
10. **Meeting assessment:** The Chair commented on the comprehensive information and well-written reports. He thanked all for their support in preparing for the meeting and the wider processes which had informed it, all of which contributed to a very promising picture going forward.

Finally, he thanked the staff governor, Tom Cox, for his contribution to the ESC in recent years and assured him that he would continue to be involved as appropriate to his College role as IT Manager. The Clerk advised that the successful candidate in the forthcoming staff governor election would inform whether their involvement in the ESC was sensible.

*The meeting ended at 17.58.*

Chair.....

Date.....

NCW 4/3/21