

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER
MINUTES OF
THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON Tuesday 8 March 2022 at 16.30

Present: Mrs Ann Donoghue, Mr Dan Lodge (Principal), Mr Graham Lawrence, Mr Paul Mittendorfer, Mr Will Power, Dr David Skipp, Mr Stephen Avery

In attendance: Members of SMT - Mr Ian Dumbleton (FD), Rob Hussey (VP Curriculum), Andrea John (VP Pastoral), Mr Steve Martell (DP), Ms Nicola Whitehead (Clerk), Mrs Russha Sellings (in-coming Clerk)

In the Chair: Mrs Ann Donoghue

Members confirmed they were content with the proposed consent items and focus on key strategic agenda items (5-9).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting which opened as scheduled. Members were notified of matters to be discussed under AOB at the end of the meeting.

2443. **Apologies for Absence** received and accepted from Co-optee Mr Wakefield.

Mr Power advised he would need to depart at 6.00pm.

2444. **Declaration of Interests:** none declared with respect of the items on the agenda.

2445. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 and the 16 February 2022 were **approved**.

2446. **Matters Arising**

2414: Marketing Strategy budget (c/f) - costings added, action now complete

2426: Mission consultation (see Item 7c)

2427: SAR/QIP (see Item 8)

2428: Report & Financial Statements (R&FS) - changes signed off and completed by the Finance Director

2431: Shelley / Café budgets (ref minutes 16 February 2022)

2433: AP proposal/contracts – it was noted that there was no impact on contracts from the proposal on AP (Additional Payments).

2447. **KPIs (Business)**

Paper: Business KPIs

Members **received** the KPIs. The Principal spoke of the challenges with comparatives over previous years due to pandemic. Headlines provided on strong domestic growth in student numbers; the Principal was pleased to inform members of the 3-4% increase year on year with an anticipated 5% projected growth in long term. The College also demonstrated outstanding financial health with a notable surplus at the end of January and the FD advised outturn expected to be within budget.

[16.36: Mr Avery and the VP (Pastoral) joined the meeting]

2448. **Finance Update**

Papers: Management Accounts, mid-year update and cashflows

a) Management Accounts (to end Jan)

Members noted with pleasure the positive set of accounts **received**. A query was raised about any impacts of the current employment market given the climate post-pandemic resulting in a reduced workforce. The Principal acknowledged this remained a challenge against the competitive packages offered by the private sector, with the benefits of a generous college pension sometimes overlooked. However, he was confident that Collyer's continued to be an attractive employer in the community. Inflationary pressures could increase expectations for pay awards which would however need to be assessed for affordability. Recruitment issues identified had been isolated to specialist middle management roles where it was observed the number of applicants had decreased. The Chair offered to support the recruitment drive for a new HR Manager which would be gratefully received.

b) Mid-year Update of the Financial Forecast for 2021/2022

No comments raised.

c) Cashflows to 2023

Members heard from the FD concerning the pre-allocation 2022-23, now updated on the CFFR. The position was significantly better than expected across all potential variances in addition to the increase in basic funding. The Principal advised of the need to invest in delivery while being mindful of maintaining the surplus in the longer term. *A member's comment on the presentation of the balance sheet and cash flow figures would be addressed. (Action: FD)*

Recommendation: The Governing Body approve the Management Accounts and Mid-Year update to the Financial Forecasts for 2021/22

2449. **Strategy Update**

Papers: Estates masterplan, systems leadership, Mission, Vision & Values (MV&V)

Working groups

Several overlapping factors to be considered included strategic planning and reporting, auditing, post Ofsted focus areas, capacity, growth and identity conflated by developments in the wider educational landscape. Leading on from the recent Learning Walk, the Principal proposed facilitating Working Groups to support strategic discussions on the Estates Masterplan and Systems Leadership, prior to finalising the Vision. Feedback was also sought on the proposed membership. Members supported this in principle, subject to all those nominated being content.

(Action i: Principal to update brief and contact members for each Working Group, and ii Mr Lawrence speak to Mr Wakefield during a catch-up this week).

The Chair reiterated the importance of the Working Groups remaining as a strategic exploratory forum to enable informed decisions by the GB in sensible timeframe. The UMG Awayday in June might provide opportunity for feedback from first meetings in April/ May. The need for appropriate governance arrangements was raised, in particular for future development in Systems Leadership and the Principal said there could be potential interest from the Mercers' Company.

Following questions raised, specific issues to be addressed in each Working Group as follows:

(i) Estates Masterplan

- Maintaining flexibility of membership to reflect development of future plans
- Optimal size of the College – rationale for 3,000 students and what would happen when the site reaches capacity: potential future impact on the Admissions Policy and marketing strategy
- Preserving excellence and serving the community the imperative.

(ii) Systems Leadership

- How would the governance structure differ to support this and what would it look like
- Systems Leadership versus 'Academisation', the language was considered appropriate to define all principles, this could also include the Skills Agenda as example.

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved the formation of the proposed Working Groups subject to confirmation of membership.

Mission, Vision and Values (MV&V)

Robust discussion following circulation of v6 of the Vision which included updates mid-way through the consultation process:

- Positioning of Adult Ed in the Vision – the Principal believed this was covered under ‘local need’ as discussed with the Adult Ed lead
- Assurance on the position as a top-3 provider; this was confirmed by the VP (Curriculum) based on 2019 outcomes which remained the approved data set until Jan 2025
- ‘Pioneering’ as opposed to ‘adopting’ (technologies) considered more active language
- ‘University style campus’ and how this may be interpreted – the Principal agreed to revisit
- ‘Collyer’s is one of the leading sixth form colleges in the country’ – consider if still required in the final Vision
- Scope for including sense of agility/adaptability .

The Principal thanked members for the honest feedback. **(Action: Principal to continue to develop and share future iterations of the proposed Mission, Vision and Values with the Committee before final approval at GB in July 2022).**

2450. **QIP Update: Business & Community**

Paper: QIP

Members **received** the RAG rated QIP and noted in two actions in red with the following explanation; laptop loans deferred and display guidance no longer progressing.

The DP was pleased with the overall progress given the additional pressures in education.

2451. **Community update incl.**

Papers: Ofsted Action Plan, Adult Ed profitability analysis, SMCG mins x 2

a) Ofsted Action Plan

Members **received** the plan and commented on Adult Ed. The VP (Curriculum) confirmed the intention to support the offer in the future by moving under his jurisdiction to facilitate coherence of quality assurance processes with daytime provision and an integrated College culture. Members were alerted to the impacts of new requirements within the forthcoming Ofsted inspection framework on sixth form colleges around the Skills Agenda. It was believed the Adult Ed provision along with the vocational and technical offer would reflect the College’s commitment to skills along with an understanding that the College’s largely academic offer was contributing to the development of HE level skills. This was a potential item for discussion under UMG Away Day and noted as a consideration for Systems Leadership (Item 7b).

Members queried whether the Adult Ed model was comparable with market offering and the scope for further engagement in response to well-targeted products. It was suggested profitability also needed to take account of management time. Quality improvements and strategic reporting referred to Q&C. **(Action: VP (Curriculum) to circulate FE Week article re Skills Agenda)**

[17.57 – Mr Power departed the meeting]

b) Pay bands proposal

In response to NJC removal of lower support staff pay points, the Principal had consulted with the F&GP Chair. Relevant Governors were thanked for their input. The Principal advised this was a non-contentious proposal and had been supported by Unions and staff.

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved the pay bands proposal.

c) SMCG (Mins 05-11-21 & 14-01-22)

Notes **received** and referenced under Item 9b.

2452. **Policies:**

a) **Complaints Policy** and Appeal panel procedures

The Clerk provided context on the proposed highlighted updates which arose from previous learnings and aimed to simplify the processes as well as differentiate between informal and formal complaints. Agreed to remove yellow highlight in 3.2 and accept the green highlight in 6.2 in the Complaints Procedure. *Point of clarification requested on senior members of staff in 4.1 of the Complaints Procedure. (Action: Clerk)*

Members reiterated the need to ensure a robust investigation in the event of an appeal. It was also agreed to *look at the next annual complaints report to ensure it reflected formal complaints and any patterns even at an informal level as well as possible. (Action: Principal)*

Recommendation: The Governing Body approve the Complaints Policy and Procedures subject to amends as a consent item.

b) **Data Protection and Archiving and Retention of Records Policies**

It was confirmed following a question that the retention schedule was based on statutory and best practice guidance on the length of time prescribed for public bodies to hold documentation.

- i) CCTV & BW Code of Practice
- ii) Use of IT Agreement
- iii) Privacy Notice

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved the Data Protection and Archiving and Retention of Records policies and associated documents.

c) **Admissions**

i) Admissions Policy

Also an item for Q&C to consider. There were no comments to note.

ii) Student Fees and Charges Policy and Appendix of fees

Correct appendix and positioning of first year and second year fees to be confirmed. (Action: FD)

Resolved: The F&GP Committee approved Student Fees and Charges Policy with Appendix subject to clarifications.

2453. **AOB (Part II criterion h), information considered to be commercially sensitive)**

2454. **Meeting Review**

Members were content with the papers provided. The slight overrun was justified to ensure effective discussion of a number of key updates since the papers had issued.

2455. **Date of next meeting:** two further meetings in the Summer term (25-05-22 – HR) and 28-06-22 (both at 16.30).

The meeting ended at 18.52

Chair

Date

RRS 09/03/22