

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

MINUTES OF THE ESTATES SUB-COMMITTEE

held on **MONDAY, 11th OCTOBER 2021 at 16.30**

- Present: Mr Ian Dumbleton, Mr Martin Emery, Mr Graham Lawrence,
Mr Dan Lodge, Mr Steve Martell, Mr Dominic Wakefield, Mr Eric Williamson
- In attendance: Mr Richard Allin and Mr Chris Luck (BAQUS), Mr Steve Duffy (HNW
Architects): *Agenda items (and mins) 4 and 5*; Mr Sam Hamilton (Synergy)
Agenda item 6, min 4; Ms Nicola Whitehead (Clerk)
- Apologies: Robert Hardwick
- In the Chair: Mr Graham Lawrence

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 discussion would be on agenda items 4-6 (as covered by minutes 4-6 below).

1. **Declaration of interests** None
2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 14th June 2021 were approved.
3. **Matters arising:**

Item 11: **Annual assessment:** The Clerk reported that the Chair had identified some *potential changes to the ESC terms of reference for additional clarity on its remit which would be further considered.* (**Action: ESC Chair and Clerk**)

All other matters would be covered by the agenda items.

4. **Security Fence and Gates**

Papers: Updated budget as @ 6th October 2021

The Synergy Project Manager explained that, following the delayed CIF decision, the need for a revised timetable and budget for the security fencing project had been addressed. The updated estimate suggested a cost of nearly £118k incl VAT (i.e. within the budget approved by the F&GP Committee in June of £125k incl VAT). Further refinement of costs was needed in respect of the entrance gates (with c. £20k in hand) and signage. A monitoring report had been made to the ESFA/DfE.

Synergy outlined the changes proposed to the perimeter fence and entrance points with new access control measures. The contractor, A & M Fencing, was happy with the proposed works and could be instructed following the meeting, with 8-10 weeks lead time for materials.

Questions were asked in respect of:

- The cost of the additional blue fencing panel and the nature of the access controls e.g. to allow remote operation;
- A possible change in design with regard to planting shrubs along the Hurst Road boundary to create a green border. Members noted this would require a submission for a change in scope to the ESFA which might not be agreed. The fencing would however still allow for some later softening of the look through additional planting, if desired, whilst remaining secure and in keeping with the safeguarding bid.

Members were content that the bulk of the contract be awarded to A&M Fencing pending the refinement of the remaining works for which, at least in part (e.g. brick piers), a sub- or alternative contractor might be required.

HNW reminded the meeting of the outstanding planning permission request and the need to consider sightlines with regard to the road (hence more allowance being made with the siting of the fence). It was hoped that the majority of the work could however be completed by February half-term and in full by end March, in advance of the other capital projects planned at the College.

Members asked that *details of the design be provided to members. (Action: Synergy)*

[16.57 Sam Hamilton left the meeting]

5. Shelley Building Project

Papers: Timetable update 30.9.21, Feasibility update July 21, Risk register, DfE Project monitoring returns Sept 21, Expenditure listing, long term cashflow forecast, Design drawings

The Principal reported on the initial **budget and plans for Shelley** which required updating given the turbulent times since. Realistically it was anticipated that the project might now require a budget of £3.25m for which, following discussion, endorsement would be sought prior to the **approval of the Governing Body via the F&GP Committee**. With regard to the **Nursery**, every support had been offered to help with the relocation and staff would be informed imminently of the move. He confirmed a **positive DfE response** to the College's request to **move into Wave 3 TCLF funding** allowing greater flexibility in design and completion by end 2022. **Reporting to the DfE had been on schedule.**

i) Timetable

BAQUS confirmed that they hoped to release the **tender pack** end of Oct/ early Nov. **Formal launch** would follow in **December** to facilitate up-to-date pricing in a challenging market with some contractors currently reluctant to provide price guarantees at all or at least for longer than 30 days. As such the plan was for a **deadline for bids of end January, award of contract end February and a 4-week lead time to a start on 1 April 2022**. On first access to the site, the **priority** would be an **intrusive asbestos survey**. If problematic, and a 14-day notification period were needed, a delayed start to May would be necessary. More extensive asbestos removal could take longer. To-date only visual and management surveys had been possible.

ESC members recognised the **market conditions** at the current time but the difficulties in terms of the availability and pricing of materials did not suggest any rethink necessary on their preference for a steel structure given its greater flexibility in the longer term.

Members requested that full details of the tender pack be provided in good time prior to issue so that matters such as energy efficiency could be agreed. It was agreed that **final sign-off of the tender pack** would be delegated to the ESC Chair, Principal and co-optee, Mr Williamson, **w/c 22 November** but with **circulation of a summary in advance of that to all members** so that any subsequent comments could be taken into account. *(Action: i) BAQUS/ HNW to work up summary and full tender documentation in good time for circulation before w/c 22 November, and ii) Clerk to confirm timing of meeting.)*

ii) Costs

The Principal explained that since the **Governing Body approval of a budget of £2.5m**, a **reassessment had been necessary** to take account of a delay of one year for relocation of the Nursery and a change in the market, bringing BAQUS's total estimate in the summer to £2.95m. A further allowance to take account of growing inflation (of 4%) to the start of the build suggested a **potentially more realistic figure of £3.25m**, to include an allowance of £185k for furniture, fittings and equipment (FF&E) not allowed at the bidding stage.

Members recognised that **a risk remained that costs could even exceed this** given the uncertainty over materials costs. As such they requested **careful tracking against a breakdown of the various elements within the budget**. This could usefully:

- a) *amalgamate the separate sums for **contingency** but also break this down, identifying any specific allowances for key risks where possible (e.g. discovery of asbestos), given that, as reported by BAQUS, the contingency sum had been developed by reference to the risk register;*
- b) *include more **refinement on fees**, distinguishing between the various professional services.*

(Action: BAQUS/ Finance Director).

Members asked whether there was *any **scope for reserving and paying in advance** (even of appointment of contractor) for any key materials to help address the potential challenge of protracted lead times on key materials.* **(Action: BAQUS/ Finance Director).**

Potential exclusions in the budget were also explored including the need for alternative temporary or permanent storage and further refinement of the FF&E requirement. **(Action: Finance Director/ Estates Manager (?) to consider).** Members sought assurance too that College **budgets and forecasting made allowance for the increased running costs of the new build.**

With regard to the risk for a potential change in VAT treatment, the Finance Director reported the College had asked RSM to prepare an application to HMRC for an opinion on the extent to which the education sector, and Collyer's specifically, might be affected (particularly with regard to any limited business use for lettings).

iii) **Design**

HNW confirmed that more **detailed designs would be included in the tender package in November** whilst outlining the approach with the **prepared visuals**. Mr Duffy explained that the software employed by HNW helped to mitigate any risk in the building design at an earlier stage than had previously been the case. Members noted the proposed external artwork, steel frame, red brickwork and folding metal cladding. Internally, all classrooms would be IT-ready (though not necessarily all used initially as computer classrooms), so as to avoid the risk of a costly refit at a later stage.

A meeting was planned with the **College's Sustainability Committee** to discuss the target grade **A energy performance and potential user concerns** e.g. ventilation. With the latter in mind, windows would be openable and there would be an air handling unit externally, with acoustic attenuation. Each classroom would work independently. With regard to humidity control, there would be co2 chillers and heating provided by external heat pumps situated discreetly behind the staircase allowing for storage of energy. The full planning approval in place included only limited (ecological and asbestos-related) conditions. In response to questions, HNW confirmed that the MME engineer was satisfied with regard to the capacity of services.

iv) **Risks**

Further to the previous discussion, members acknowledged that **cost risks may yet be mitigated by some stabilisation of the market** given continuing competition in the market and signs of falling timber prices potentially impacting favourably on the cost and availability of steel. The discovery of some **asbestos** was considered inevitable requiring possible remediation or a change in design once known.

The Principal explained that **user consultation** had been much included along the way and would continue. With regard to **building on a 'live' site in constant use by the College**, HNW

confirmed contractors would have experience in the education sector and would be asked for a site management plan as part of the tender. Access would be via the existing route around the sports field and rugby fixtures were being moved to Horsham Rugby Club. Building the adjacent Graham Baird Building had not presented difficulties of this nature.

With reference to the Digihub build during the first Covid lockdown, HNW confirmed the **tender and subsequent contract would include the same Covid-safeguards** with regard to supplies and potential extensions of time (EoTs).

Turning to the format of the new **risk register**, members sought explanation of the key risks given they were not necessarily of the highest rating. They requested that there also be **greater refinement of the 'risk owner'**. Whilst ultimately the College as client, it was thought that the reliance on the expertise of the main contractor and professional services could be better reflected by showing these companies as risk owners. Similarly, the register might better reflect **the desired timing of action and the impact of the mitigations on risk once taken**. It was agreed to circulate the risk register once it had been revised for these comments. **(Action: BAQUS)**

In response to a question, assurance was provided by the Finance Director on the **cashflow** for the project particularly with regard to the timing of receipt of funding from external sources.

v) **Procurement**

As previously discussed, procurement was intended to be on a Design and Build approach to help mitigate risk and on a single stage basis to contractors. Refinement of (4+) **available contractors for a competitive tender** was underway (to include W Stirland given their recent performance on the Digihub) and the proposed circulation **would be included with the draft tender documentation at the November review (Action: BAQUS)**

6. **Social space/ Cafe**

Papers: Feasibility estimate including costs, Visuals

The Principal reported on the additional work on the feasibility of an **additional catering facility parallel and integral to the Shelley development** to ensure that an increased number of students had access to both teaching and social space.

i) **Design**

HNW shared the sketches of the proposed café, confirming that **the approach would be consistent with the adjacent Digihub** to help achieve a sense of space with large windows, uniform flooring and acoustic baffles with the ceiling treatment possibly helping to differentiate spaces. The appropriate circulation was still under consideration and the RCU were being fully consulted on the design. In response to questions, the Principal confirmed that the light blue cladding would continue, consistent with the adjacent buildings but could be reviewed as the masterplan developed further.

[18.32 Steve Duffy left the meeting]

ii) **Timetable**

The intention was to reach the same point on café design as on the Shelley Building by the end of November (although approvals would be slightly behind) and ideally to complete the café by September 2022 making this project potentially the more urgent in terms of the pre-order of materials.

iii) **Procurement**

Given the concurrent projects, it was hoped to have the same contractor for the Shelley Building and café in order to achieve economies of scale and more flexible and efficient use of personnel

and infrastructure with e.g. just one site office needed. As such it was hoped to issue a tender addendum to follow the main Shelley tender but before its return allowing the procurement process to then be concurrent, albeit with differentiated bids.

iv) **Risk**

Members noted that the professional services had undertaken the necessary surveys and the reports were encouraging in terms of the existing form of construction being consistent with the desired plans e.g. in terms of moving walls without the obstruction of current steel columns. *Given the need for a drainage point for the café, the Estates Manager agreed to share the sketches of services when there had previously been a changing room on the site. (Action: Estates Manager)*

v) **Costs**

The Principal explained that the Feasibility estimate suggested that the cost would still be c. £400k excl VAT as previously envisaged. Whilst the approved Property Strategy included the café, formal approval of the budget, and - when appropriate – contractor, had yet to be given by the Governing Body following endorsement by the ESC and F&GP Committee in turn. *ESC members endorsed the proposals and budget of £500k (inc VAT) for the café.*

[18.32 Richard Allin and Chris Luck left the meeting]

7. External Project Management Monitoring

Paper: Performance management template

Members noted the proposed monitoring form for all external project managers drawing on College experience of performance indicators in relation to the College's auditors as used in the Audit Committee. Performance would be RAG rated from 1 (Outstanding) to 4 (Inadequate) using Ofsted grades with a commentary providing further detail.

Part II minute: Criterion h): Information considered to be commercially sensitive

[18.40 Eric Williamson left the meeting]

8. Report from the Estates Manager incl planned maintenance

Paper: Report from the Estates Manager

Members noted the:

- End of the 12 months 'defects' period since completion of the Digihub with all defects resolved from the College point of view. Subject to HNW final checks, the outstanding retention could now be released;
- Successful completion of the majority of the planned maintenance projects over the summer including room moves, conversion of the new Conference Room, the refurbishment of the Science fire escape and enhanced security measures;
- Recent Legionella re risk assessment which had identified some areas for improvement to be incorporated into the next maintenance plan.

9. Report from the Health and Safety Committee:

Papers: Minutes of the H&S Committee of 23rd September 2021 and associated H&S Officer's report

The H&S Manager reported on:

- the new lockdown procedure being in place with staff and student training complete;

- The imminent receipt from DfE of 24 co2 monitors requiring a plan of use and response system;
- Ongoing Covid measures including good ventilation and asymptomatic testing for staff and students.

ESC members recorded their thanks to the H&S and wider staff team for their considerable efforts to keep staff, students and visitors safe.

10. **AoB** None

11. **Date of the next meeting:** Friday 3rd December **2021 at 10.30** (*with prior tender review meeting w/c 22nd November to be advised*).

12. **Meeting assessment:**

The Chair apologised for the long meeting with members agreeing however that there was much important information to cover given the complexity of the projects in prospect. The papers from Synergy had been sent to the Clerk later than requested, so they could not be included when other reports were issued, but Synergy had recognised the importance of timely papers and had agreed to ensure that they were provided as required in the future. The verbal report, together with the paper tabled by Synergy, had been sufficient for the discussion. The documentation had otherwise generally been comprehensive facilitating discussion and appropriate levels of assurance. Members were invited to send any further feedback to the Chair or Clerk.

The meeting ended at 18.50.

Chair.....

Date.....

NCW 20/6/21