



FINANCE, STAFFING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting on Tuesday 25 October 2016

Present:	Mr J Turner (<i>Chair</i>)	Chair of Governors
	Mr S Holderness	Governor
	Ms S Overton-Edwards	Principal
	Ms S Munden	Staff Governor
	Mr H Solanki	Parent Governor
In Attendance:	Mr J Bagley	Vice-Principal Curriculum
	Mr N Leivas-Mistry	Vice-Principal Quality
	Mr H Ravat	Vice-Principal Resources
	Mr R Mansfield	Clerk

Ref.		Action
F/16/41	<p>Item 1 – Apologies for Absence: There were no apologies for absence. The meeting was declared quorate.</p>	
F/16/42	<p>Item 2 – Declaration of Interests in Agenda Items: There were no declarations of interest in agenda items.</p>	
F/16/43	<p>Item 3 – Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising: The minutes of the meeting on 16 June 2016 were accepted as an accurate record and were duly signed by John Turner. Under matters arising, Suzanne Overton-Edwards confirmed that action was being taken as described to involve parents early in addressing concerns about students.</p>	
F/16/44	<p>Item 4 – Estates Issues: <i>4.1 Estates Matters</i> Hamid Ravat presented a paper on estates matters. The largest element in the programme of summer works had been the increases to the College's capacity through the creation of the mezzanine floor, for which the cost had been about £130K (and therefore within the approved estimate). Five pods had also been fully converted into classrooms, and an additional Physics laboratory had been created. Larger staff rooms had been provided for two programme areas, the space released being converted to much needed meeting rooms. The gas boiler had been replaced, at a cost of £26K. He then described the IT works that had been completed</p>	

during the summer. These included the purchase of more computers and laptops, the replacement of servers, expansion of network storage space, upgrades to telephony and the rollout of Microsoft 16 across the College.

The old minibus had been sold.

Innes England had advised that they hoped that the Planning Application for the Blackbird Road would be considered by the Planning Committee in November 2016.

John Turner asked whether all work stations on the mezzanine floor were to be equipped with computers. Hamid Ravat said the space was intended for a variety of private study uses; students might if they wished bring their own laptops or other devices, or borrow from the Learning Resource Centre. He also explained that, whilst the College made selective use of storage space in the Cloud, high use of this facility would incur significant charges.

John Turner asked why the College had chosen to use the gas boiler during the summer months. Hamid Ravat explained that the gas boiler was easier to operate and maintain than the biomass boiler and was more flexible when demand was intermittent.

Hamid Ravat then advised the Committee that there had been a flood during the week of the recent OfSTED inspection. A leak had occurred in D block, caused by a corroded sink fitting in a fume cupboard on the top floor. Water had reached the rooms below on all floors; these had had to be dried out and a carpet replaced. He recorded his thanks to premises and teaching staff and to the students affected, all of whom had coped very well with the aftermath. John Turner said that this was surely the second such incident since the College had relocated. Hamid Ravat agreed and said that he had commissioned checks on all similar sinks. Steve Holderness asked whether the cost had been recovered through insurance. Hamid Ravat advised him that it would have been uneconomic to claim the cost, at less than £5K, given the excess on the policy and the impact on future premiums.

The meeting received the report on estates issues.

4.2 Annual Health & Safety Report 2015/2016

Hamid Ravat presented the annual health & safety report for 2015/2016. The number of recorded incidents and accidents was in line with previous trends. The largest category of accidents was sports-related. The report reviewed arrangements for first aid, the minibus, fire regulations and specialist staffing. The College was appropriately resourced and its arrangements up-to-date.

The meeting received the annual health & safety report.

F/16/45 Item 5 – Finance Issues:

5.1 Learner Numbers and Funding 2015/2016

Hamid Ravat presented a report prepared in early October on learner numbers and funding. Since that date there had been perhaps 20 more leavers. He predicted that the College would have more than 100 students above target at the first census point.

The meeting received the learner numbers and funding report.

5.2 Draft Management Accounts 2015/2016

Hamid Ravat presented the draft management accounts for 2015/2016. The reported outturn was a deficit of £94K. However the underlying result, before FRS17 Pension charges of £204K, was a surplus of £110K (as compared with the operating surplus of £200K in the budget). Although income had been £59K above budget, as a result of higher receipts from local authorities for High Needs Students, and pay costs slightly over budget, non-pay costs had exceeded budget by £131K, in particular because of the higher costs of supply staff to cover maternity, higher recruitment and high needs learners.

Capital expenditure had been very close to budget.

The balance sheet showed a healthy closing cash position of nearly £2.8 million. With the exception of the operating surplus percentage, the financial KPIs were in line with targets or better.

Hamid Ravat reported that the auditors had stated that they were generally happy with the accounts he had just presented. However after due consideration they had agreed to an adjustment, whereby £120K of unspent funds provided by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) for free meals over the two years 2014/2016 need no longer be treated as future liability, as it was now clear that the EFA would not seek repayment. The adjustment had the effect of changing the outturn to a surplus of about £25K.

He advised the meeting that the EFA had changed its approach in the current year to allow virement between free meals and bursary funds with the result that unspent allocations would in future all be subject to reclaim or carried forward to the following year.

The meeting received the draft management accounts.

5.3 Revised Budget 2016/2017 and Financial Forecast 2016/2018

Hamid Ravat advised the meeting that because of a significant recent change he had taken the unusual step of preparing a revised budget for the current year. The change had been caused by the termination of the sub-contracting

agreement with GEMEG. This had had the effect of saving the £150K which would otherwise have been paid to GEMEG. At the same time he had also made some adjustments (possibly understated) to the budget for teachers' pay in the light of recent strong recruitment. The budget now showed a small surplus of £25K, as compared with the operating deficit of £75K in the original budget. The revised financial forecast showed a revised surplus of £50K for 2017/2018.

Hamid Ravat explained that the EFA required informal notification only of the revisions, as the Agency was interested in major adverse changes only. He planned however to share the revised budget and forecast, once formally approved, with John Boyle within the Area-Based Review process.

Steve Holderness asked whether an adjustment should also have been made in respect of the recent replacement of the boiler. Hamid Ravat said that this had been factored into the original budget. He also confirmed that there should be less reliance on supply staff in the current year to cope with the increase in student numbers. Suzanne Overton-Edwards reminded the meeting that this increase was all the more remarkable, given the loss of the 40 students at GEMEG.

The meeting commended the revised budget and financial forecast to the Board for approval.

F/16/46 Item 6 – Human Resources Issues:

6.1 Staffing Update

Naz Leivas-Mistry presented the staffing report. There had been comparatively large numbers of starters and leavers, as was normal during the current season. Headcount was marginally above budget as extra teaching staff were needed. Six members of staff were on maternity leave. There were healthy numbers of applicants for the few current vacancies. He then presented sickness absence data for 2015/2016 and the current year to date. The previous year had been unusual in that the absence rate of corporate staff had been higher than that of teachers. The current year had started well.

The meeting received the staffing update.

6.2 Staff Survey 2016 Action Plan

Suzanne Overton-Edwards reported that she expected the action plan for the staff survey conducted in the previous term would shortly be agreed with staff representatives.

The meeting received this report.

6.3 Annual Report on Equality Diversity and Inclusivity 2015/2016

Naz Leivas-Mistry presented the annual report on equality

SOE

diversity and inclusivity for 2015/2016. This had been instituted to comply with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges. The report dealt with the subject from the perspective of staff; a separate report dealing with students would be presented to the Standards & Quality Committee. He concluded that the profile of staff was quite well aligned with that of the student population. The meeting agreed that the report was an interesting start and asked that it should in future be developed to consider the evidence on how successfully the College applied its policy to all cohorts of staff.

The meeting received this report.

6.4 Annual Human Resources Management Report 2015/2016
Naz Leivas-Mistry presented the annual report on human resources management for 2015/2016. This also had been instituted to comply with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges. The report dealt with the main changes and activities during the year, and where practicable, compared the College's performance with targets and national benchmarks.

The meeting received the report.

F/16/47

Item 7 – Marketing Issues:

7.1 Marketing Plan 2016/2017

James Bagley presented the marketing strategy and operational plan for 2016/2017. The horizon had been limited to one year, in line with the College's strategic plan, pending the outcome of the Area-Based Review. Given the success of the previous version and the fact that the College buildings were full to capacity, the strategy was little changed.

Suzanne Overton-Edwards concurred that there was little further scope to increase capacity by making internal adjustments, although the College still needed to grow and had opportunity to do so. It was agreed that the Committee should consider accommodation strategy as a standing agenda item from now on. Steve Holderness said that this needed to be accompanied by consideration of sources of funding. Hamid Ravat said that the College might well need to be part of a city-wide consideration of future accommodation.

John Turner asked that the roll numbers for competitor colleges in 2015/2016 should be entered in the strategy.

James Bagley then provided an update on current marketing activities, which included careers events in the College's catchment area.

The meeting received the marketing strategy and update.

RM

JB

7.2 Student Recruitment

James Bagley reported briefly on the College's strong recruitment. Currently there were 1740 students on the roll. There had been particularly strong growth in Science, Business Studies, Learning for Life and Work and Health & Public Services. He advised that there had been a sharp upturn in the number of students who had yet to obtain GCSE Mathematics and / or English at A* to C grade.

The meeting received this report.

F/16/48 Item 8 – General Issues:

8.1 Area Based Reviews

Suzanne Overton-Edwards gave an oral report on recent activity within the Area-Based Review. The next Steering Group, on 14 November 2016, was to consider a joint paper, yet to be prepared, from the three Leicester sixth form colleges outlining a single option.

The Committee noted this report.

8.2 Performance against Committee's Targets for 2015/2016 and Proposed Targets 2016/2017

Robert Mansfield presented an analysis of the Committee's performance against its targets. These had not been formally reviewed and renewed in October 2015 and he had therefore referred to those for the previous year. With this exception, all targets had been met. He recommended that for the current year targets relating to monitoring action in response to the staff survey and to the accommodation strategy should be added. This was agreed.

The Committee received the report and agreed the recommended action.

8.3 Progress against Strategic Targets 2016/2017

Suzanne Overton-Edwards provided details of the latest progress against the strategic targets subject to scrutiny by the Committee.

The meeting received this report.

8.4 Annual Report on IT Security

Hamid Ravat presented the annual report on IT security for 2015/2016. This too had been instituted to comply with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges. He had prepared the report himself in the absence of an IT Manager, who had recently been recruited. The report dealt with physical security, network access, network security, email / internet security and other IT controls.

John Turner asked for an assurance that daily backups were held off-site. Hamid Ravat said that he would discuss this with

the new IT Manager.

The meeting received this report.

F/16/49 Item 9 – Date and Time of next Meeting:

The date and time of the next meeting were confirmed as Tuesday 15 November at 5.30 p.m. at the College.

F/16/50 Item 10 – Any Other Business:

There was no other business.