

FAREHAM COLLEGE
FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
09 June 2021

M I N U T E S

DUE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present: Mark Hoban
Andrew Kaye
Andy Wannell (Chair)
Karen Woods

In attendance: Kevin Briscoe (Corporation Chair)
Richard Bryant (Deputy Principal, Finance & Resources)
Sarah Carruthers (Director of People & Culture)
Georgina Flood (Head of Governance)
Anoushka Ottley (Managing Director, Business Plus) until Item 06iv only

The meeting was preceded by a deep dive presentation of the financial aspects of the forecasting, budgeting, and curriculum planning process (circulated in advance of the meeting).

Q: A member queried how the college mitigate the changes to curriculum in –year? I.e., to what extent can we control the potential ups and downs during the academic year?

A: DPF&R confirmed that there is robust process to check and constantly monitor course numbers of v. staff workload. In the event of an issue, we consider re-deployment of staff, and or providing a different course within a similar remit. If we can't recover costs by these methods, we essentially must look at making savings. The Principal confirmed that at this point, we have reduced the non-pay costs as far as we can and any further savings/options in year will need to be found in pay costs. The Committee discussed the difficulty of balancing staff resources/student numbers and lagged funding.

14/21 Item 1: Declarations of Interest

Members of the Committee were reminded of the need to declare any personal or financial interest in any item of business to be considered during the meeting. The Chair noted his personal interest in Item 06iv Business Plus update as his employer Fareham Borough Council has tendered a bid which Business Plus is one of the tenderers (although he is not personally involved in the decision-making process)

15/21 Item 2: Apologies for absence and welcome to new members

Apologies for absence were received from Karen Shreves and Bryan Newton.

16/21 Item 3i: Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10 March 2021

Subject to a minor typo on page 2 of the minutes, the minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising from them which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

17/21 Item 3ii: Correspondence: EFSA letter dated 19 May 2021: Finance Assessment/Governor's Dashboard

The DPF&R provided an overview of a letter received from the EFSA outlining the College's finance assessment for 2021-22 and the related dashboard of benchmark information. The Committee noted the financial health scores as Good for 2019/20 (the outturn year), and Outstanding for 2020/21 (the current budget year). The Committee endorsed the positive feedback of the College's financial position.

Members noted the correspondence.

18/21 Item 4i: Summer Term Health and Safety Report to the Corporation

The Deputy Principal provided an overview to the report circulated in advance to the Committee detailing the Health and Safety report for the Summer term. Items of note included;

- A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) phone 'spot check' in respect of our COVID response received very positive feedback.
- Accidents/Near miss statistics low due to Lockdown, 4 accidents in each month April – May. Notable incidents 1 x CETC, falling tray in locker, boiling of cloths at BRC and reporting of fumes at CETC – work is being done to investigate and resolve this issue.
- Hazard reporting is positive with relatively healthy numbers, still pushing on culture to report
- Compliance heat map now fully completed – a number of actions to fulfil e.g., formal recording keeping and COSHH requirements (in the long term this will form a quicker annual audit function) but a well completed piece of work for the H&S team.

The Committee noted the Summer Term Health and Safety report.

19/21 Item 4: Strategic Priorities and Quality Improvement Plan

The Principal provided an overview of the SP&QIP areas allocated for review by the F&R Committee.

Ongoing areas for improvement were identified as;

- Commercial income – significantly compromised with COVID, e.g., closure of restaurant, salon, gym etc it was noted a revised approach for commercial income will be considered for the new academic year
- Operating Surplus – due to the confidential nature of this item and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

Members of the Committee reviewed and noted the Strategic and Quality Improvement Plan

20/21 Item 6i: Management Accounts as of 30 April 2021

Members of the Committee received a confidential paper on the Management Accounts as of 30 April 2021. Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the paper and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

Members of the Finance and Resources Committee reviewed the contents of the paper and noted the current financial position

21/21 Item 6ii: Budget 2021-22 inc 3-yr plan

The DP F&R provided members of the Committee with an overview of the 2021-22 Budget including the 3-yr plan. Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the paper and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

Members of the Finance and Resources Committee reviewed and recommended the 2021-22 Budget and 3-yr plan to the Corporation for approval.

22/21 Item 6iii: Capital Projects update

The Committee received a report circulated in advance, providing an overview of current capital projects and an outline of suggested projects for the year ahead. Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the paper and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

DECISION: The Committee recommended the Corporation approve a suggested capital programme budget of £400,000 for 2021-22.

The Committee noted the report

23/21 Item 6iv: Business Plus update

The new MDBP Anoushka Ottley provided a brief overview report outlining the key income gained in the period April – March . New employers including Ascenti, and Southampton University were noted as having joined the list of employers. Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the paper and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

The Committee noted the report

24/21 Item 6v: People & Culture Update

The Director of People and Culture provided a brief overview to the termly people and culture update circulated to the Committee in advance.

- Sickness absence remains low, as does the impact of COVID which is positive.
- Only 1 person remains on furlough (and will likely remain until the furlough deadline in October 2021)
- The average annual turnover rate has increased marginally to 20%. (December to April stable at 18%)
- Minor staff disciplinary issues with 2 being dealt with informally, and one grievance outstanding.
- W/c 24th May 2021 the College entered formal consultation with Trade Unions and staff members for purposes of organisational change. This will potentially affect less than 10 staff.
- Our number of vacancies have slowed since March 2021 and there has been a slight increase of internal appointments, three of which have been promotions.
- Staff Wellbeing remains a high priority, and we are working well with line managers to deliver to staff
- A staff survey specifically on Contractual Pay and Benefits took place during April which was generally very positive. The DPC provided additional information to the Committee via a presentation (available via the Portal)

Q. A member queried if the DPC felt the higher response rate for employees feeling there was 'no career progression' was justified?

A. DPC confirmed they felt it was slightly higher than is fair, there are some posts where there genuinely are no options for progression but for most there is some. It was agreed that raising awareness of progression routes would be useful for staff.

Q. A member queried if the DPC had any view on the low response rate to the survey (45%)

A. DPC noted that employee response has traditionally been quite low, anonymous survey's work better but there is still work to do to increase engagement in this type of feedback.

The Committee were reminded of earlier discussions to defer the 2020-21 annual pay award from both the Autumn and Spring Term meetings. It was noted the financial situation/effect of COVID were considered sufficiently stable to enable a final recommendation to be made. To this end, the Committee were asked to recommend a 1% increase to all eligible staff (in line with the AOC pay award recommendation released in October 2020) to the Corporation for approval.

The Principal also suggested the timing of the annual pay review is moved to the Summer Term on a permanent basis. Historically the pay review has been considered in October for an April delivery, but later in the summer term gives better likelihood for financial variables to be known and reduces the potential to 'back track' or delay any award. Additionally, the Principal requested the option to discuss non-consolidated pay awards during the Autumn term. The Committee agreed

DECISION: The Committee recommended the Corporation approved a 1% 2020-21 Annual Pay award to all eligible staff with effect from 1st August 2021.

DECISION: The Committee agreed to permanently move the timing of the annual pay review to the Summer term, with an option to discuss an additional non-consolidated pay award in the Autumn term.

25/21 Item 8: Board development Review – Board Behaviours

The HG introduced this report (circulated in advance) informing members that results so far from the Board Development review (with Shirley Collier) had suggested the dominant potential 'culture' of the Corporation via questionnaire and interview had been 'purpose' and 'learning'. The Committee were asked (using the definitions of purpose and learning provided in the report) what would need to be in place/change /what behaviours would Governors need to adopt to facilitate a more 'learning' style.

Member's suggestions included;

- To create more space in the agenda for discussion, e.g. by limiting the content/presentation of items;
- Having agenda items that posed open questions to stimulate that debate
- Shortening agenda packs
- Continue with Deep Dives, but also introduce problem solving into the process, to enable the SLT to draw from the broad sector experience and ideas from the Board members.
- Using 'questions' e.g. what do we mean by financial mitigation?

The Committee noted the report

26/21 Item 9: Strategic Plan Review

The HG provided members of the Committee with an overview of both the Strategic Planning process, reminding members that finalising any changes to the current 2021-22 2-year plan as part of the wider 2020-

2025 Vision was to be completed by Committees. The Committee had no additional points to make.

The Committee noted the report

27/21 Item 10: Strategy/Policy

The DPC provided members of the Committee with an overview of both the Pay and Benefits and Flexible Working policies, providing assurance that they had both been approved by the College staff representative body.

The Committee recommended the Pay and Benefits policy for Corporation approval

The Committee approved the Flexible Working policy

28/20 Any other Business and Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee was confirmed as Wednesday 24 November at 5.30pm. The first part of the meeting ended at 19.31.

SIGNED



DATE 24.11.21