



**WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ESTATES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Finance, Resources and Estates Committee meeting held on 23rd July 2018 at 4.00 pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Terry Dean
Malcolm Hall MBE, Chair
Dame Asha Khemka DBE DL
Martin Rigley MBE

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Tom Stevens, Deputy Principal: Business Development
Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communication, Engagement and Learner Experience

| | | ACTION by whom | DATE by when |
|----------|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | <p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</u></p> <p>The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any interests that they may have in matters to be discussed. No interests were declared save for standing items.</p> | | |
| 2 | <p><u>APOLOGISES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Alan Mele and Alison Breedon.</p> | | |
| 3 | <p><u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7TH MARCH 2018</u></p> <p>The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.</p> <p>AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2018.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> | | |
| 4 | <p><u>ACTION PROGRESS REPORT</u></p> <p>The Committee were content to note the update provided.</p> | | |
| 5 | <p><u>STUDENT UNION BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2018/19</u></p> <p>The Vice Principal provided a verbal update and explained that unfortunately the College has not been able to appoint a Student Union President as it would normally do at this point in the year.</p> | | |

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

She indicated that the College is writing to all of its students who are due to conclude their current courses this year to see if anyone would be interested in applying for the position. If this approach is not successful then there may be a need to look at the student union structure next year, for example, instead of having one full-time SU President to look to have two part-time employees who are enrolled as 18/19 students. She indicated that having two part time appointments may work well in the autumn and spring term, however it is likely that the summer term will be a challenge given the need for them to focus on their studies.

She advised that the Student Union (SU) President for 17/18, Lewis Maskery, has done a lot of work over the year and the objectives will remain the same for next year, these include:

- 1) Ensuring that the SU is a representative voice for students. She advised that the SU have done a lot of work with UK Citizens this year and have also worked well with the national NUS. The SU were able to secure the attendance of Ben Bradley in College and next year there is planned work with the labour party involving a series of student debates, some suggested topics are conduct and behaviour and political engagement. She indicated that the SU President Chair's all of the learner voice sessions.
- 2) Promote citizenship and engagement. This will include a reminder to all students to register for and participate in voting. There will be opportunities for debates and discussions. The SU was also able to secure the attendance of Friends of the Earth in College this year.
- 3) Make a contribution to College life – this is all about ensuring that students are equipped with the softer life skills.

In terms of the budget for 18/19 she confirmed that it will remain the same, with the College providing a block grant of £100k, this is then supplemented with any further fundraising undertaken by the SU including the sales of NUS cards etc.

The Committee questioned whether the block grant provided has been benchmarked with other Colleges. It was confirmed that this has not been done at this stage. The Committee agreed that, they would if possible like to see some comparisons. It was acknowledged that Colleges may not all account for SU expenditure in the same way, particularly in relation to staff costs. Whilst acknowledging this they felt that it would be useful to know the approach taken by other colleges.

VP C, E &
LE

Sept.
2018

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

6 **ALUMNI UPDATE**

The Vice Principal: Communication, Engagement and Learner Experience drew members' attention to her written report and confirmed that the Colleges alumni service provided by Think Alumni was launched in April with over 8146 former HE and A Level students sent invitations to join.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The managed service comprises of written content pieces for a monthly e-bulletin, blog articles, alumni profile page and LinkedIn groups supported by a dedicated website. The first launch bulletin was received by 6708 recipients (82%) and opened by 44% of those recipients against a benchmark of 44%. Click through was 12% against a benchmark of 10%.

Engagement for the second bulletin saw a 25% open rate with a click through rate of 6%. The second bulletin naturally does not have the novelty value and therefore impact of the launch email and therefore engagement rates are likely to be lower. Popular articles were

- How to balance taking a course with your job;
- Tips for your first day at your new job;
- Common work place problems – what to do if members of your team aren't picking up the slack.

The LinkedIn profile set up has 342 individual connections with the Alumni group having 38 members. A campaign is ongoing to further drive up membership.

She explained that at this early stage in the campaign it is about growing membership and ensuring regular content is shared with those members. It is too early at this stage to see any tangible return on investment and as such the College has agreed to run with Think Alumni for a second year and at which point the position will be reviewed.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

(Louise Knott left the meeting at 4.15 pm)

7 BAD DEBT – REPORT AND WRITE-OFFS

The Committee were asked to consider the written report and a number of matters were noted:

- The College makes provision for bad and doubtful debts in line with its accounting policy, making full provision for debts over 90 days old and levying a 5% provision on residual sales and student ledger balances.
- The College uses a third party debt collection agency to pursue non-payment of debts in line with the policy and procedure.
- A summary of the current provision for bad and doubtful debt was provided and it was explained that the largest proportion of the provision sits with the main sales ledger, which accounts for 86.9% of the total, which is a broadly similar proportion to the position at the end of the last financial year. Of the £418k, £5.5k is general provision calculated at 5% of outstanding debts and the balance is made up of specific provisions.
- Within the specific sale ledger positions three debts will be written off in the current year – all have been fully provided for so there will be no impact to the results for 17/18. These are:

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

- a) Richard Owen Training have made a winding up application (£70,992)
- b) Pine Wood Training have now been liquidated (£74,464)
- c) KF Training (£19,374).

In relation to the latter company the Committee questioned whether it has gone in to liquidation. Staff were unable to confirm this and it was therefore agreed that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

Interim
Director
Finance

Sept.
2018

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017/18

The report prepared by Jaqueline Gascoyne was reviewed and it was acknowledged that it principally provides statistical information. Key matters noted were:

- In terms of the number of accidents in the 16/17 academic year there were 561 and in 17/18 there were 710. The reason for the increases were discussed and it was acknowledged that the health and safety team have no particular concerns. The Health and Safety team only now report upon site based staff and learners as it is acknowledged that this is where the majority of accidents are reported.
- The data states that there has been an increase in the accident rate albeit a marginal one. This can be a concern, however the health and safety team acknowledge that there are a lot of factors that can influence the accident rate which includes increased reporting, which is a positive indicator or a reduction in safety culture, which is a negative indicator. The Committee made the observation that the number of 'near misses' reported has increased which they viewed as a positive learning opportunity.
- The team is no longer reporting on accident data in each department and school due to vast variances in these areas which renders the data limited for comparison between them.
- Page 2 of the report sets out the RIDDOR reportable accidents and page 3 summarises the non-RIDDOR investigations. It was explained that the health and safety team complete their investigations before formally reporting to the Health and Safety Executive where appropriate.
- The number of RIDDORs and non-reportable investigations is not unusual. There is a concern however that, procedures and controls that are documented in risk assessments are not always being followed and the deviation from these can be the cause of the accident. It was confirmed that all staff are reminded not to document control measures that will not be followed, the risk assessment is not a tick box to comply with the law and it should be considered as a live document that is referenced and understood by all that it relates to.

Signed : _____ Chair

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- Following on from the restructure a new audit programme will be set to commence in September, this will be taking in to account where staff will be managing expanded and new areas. A challenge from the Committee was to ensure that there is sufficient capacity within the health and safety team given the staff changes made.
- Online training – it was explained that the College has increased the number of online training opportunities as it is considered the most practical and cost effective method of ensuring all staff are kept up to date, however it was acknowledged that this needs to be carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure a positive impact.
- Fire evacuations – these are regularly scheduled to ensure that the College is compliant in terms of its obligations. The Committee questioned whether the College undertakes disaster simulations. It was confirmed that it does.
- Update on counter terrorism measures – the draft counter terrorism guidance document is structured so that the body of the document is an overview of the terrorist threat and how it can affect the College and the appendices are the detailed procedures that should be followed in the event of a threat or attack. As terrorism is such a vast subject to cover there are lots of appendices to try and cover lots of threats. However, as it takes time to test out procedures and the threat methodology changes it is recognised that the detailed procedures need to be flexible and will be subject to change. Therefore a decision has been made to redraft the guidance document and take out the detailed procedures so that the guidance document can be submitted to executive for feedback and unions for approval so at least there is some up to date support guidance available for staff.
- Bomb evacuation test at Engineering Centre – the site has had the fire alarm modified to accommodate a different tone and this was activated for a full week so users of the building could familiarise themselves with the difference in them in readiness for the bomb evacuation test on Monday 26th February 2018. The advantages of an audible alarm is that it alerts all users in the building at the same time (unless there are users with hearing impairments but these then have a personal emergency evacuation plan) and it also unlocks all MAG locked exits allowing free movement out of the building. This was impeded at the July 2017 test at Derby Road as there are a lot of exit doors usually used in a fire evacuation which remained locked during the test. The Committee were advised that the fire alarm at Derby Road may need to be reviewed in the future, however this will be at a cost. It was confirmed that an update on this will be provided in the next academic year.

Director of
IT

Dec.
2018

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

9 **COMMITTEE REVIEW**

The Clerk introduced this item and asked the Committee to undertake an annual review regarding its arrangements, in terms of membership, terms of reference and self-assessment for the year. The Committee considered the start time of meetings and agreed that for 18/19 it would be beneficial to have them at 5.00 pm and not 4.00 pm.

In terms of membership it was noted that the College is seeking to recruit new Governors over the summer and in to the start of the autumn term. The Committee all agreed that they would find it useful to have someone with banking and/or finance experience to be recruited as a member of this Committee too. The Committee were of the view that the terms of reference remained fit for purpose and therefore made the recommendation to the Board that they remain unchanged for the 18/19 academic year.

AGREED: to note the content of the review undertaken.

10 **AOB**

As a matter of additional business the Deputy Principal circulated a report on the nursery which provides an annual review and proposals regarding nursery fees for 2018/19.

He explained that in the last 12 months there have been some significant national changes including the publication of a national model agreement for parent free entitlements for 15 and 30 hour funding. There has been the launch of childcare choices website for parents to check eligibility for funding and child care tax free top up. For every £8 contributed by parents the Government tops up with £2 to a maximum of £2000 per child.

He explained that fees in relation to places offered are very 'tight' and the College nursery is not a profit making facility. He advised that national increases to 30 hours entitlement will be a challenge for many providers.

In terms of the 17/18 position the forecast was for a deficit, however it is believed that the year will end with a very small surplus. He advised that occupancy this year has decreased and therefore the College has had to manage costs carefully and it was acknowledged that all staff involved in the nursery have worked really hard to bring the provision in on budget.

The Deputy Principal made the proposal that the nursery fees for 18/19 be adjusted to take in to account present occupancy levels and the 30 hour free funding for parents earning up to £100k. The Committee were asked to consider the recommendation that for 18/19, full week nursery fees are increased from £185 to £199 (7.56%) compared to 17/18 and day rates are increased from £41.70/£42.70 to £46/£47 (+10.0%).

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The Committee questioned whether the college provision would remain competitive if the increases were made, it was confirmed that it would remain competitive.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the update provided and;
- b) to approve the 2018/19 fees as proposed.

11 **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO APRIL 2018**

The Committee reviewed the information presented and were happy to note the position.

12 **ESTATES UPDATE**

The Deputy Principal Business Development drew the Committee's attention to his detailed report and he explained that quite a lot of the work planned for 17/18 has had to be deferred because of the College's financial position. He provided assurance that no essential items had been deferred and he referred the Governors to section 11 of his report regarding the statutory compliance testing required in relation to the electrics. He advised that the Electricity at Work regulations 1989 require electric testing to be undertaken within public and commercial buildings every 5 years. The electrical testing for Derby Road, Station Park and the Engineering Centre is due for re-inspection in September 2018. Quotations are being obtained for the works and costs associated with the electrical inspections and implementation will be reported as part of the 18/19 budget. He indicated that for budgeting purposes it is anticipated that costs will be in the region of £30k +VAT (£36k).

The Committee questioned and challenged whether risk assessments have been done regarding the works not completed as planned in 17/18. The Deputy Principal advised that they have not been undertaken yet but are planned.

AGREED to note the content of the report provided.

13 **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

It was agreed that confidential items would be recorded separately.

14 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk confirmed that the next scheduled meeting was Thursday 20th September, now at 5.00 pm rather than 4.00 pm.

Meeting concluded at 5.05 pm.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date: