

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 1pm on Thursday 24 November 2016
Committee Room, Reaseheath Hall

Present: Malcolm Burns
Meredydd David
Jon Furber (Chair)
Elizabeth Harrison
Richard Ratcliffe
Eddie Sims

In attendance: Melvin Johnson, Health and Safety Manager (part)
Graeme Lavery, Director of Finance and Resources
Dave Kynaston, Vice Principal
Louise Woodman, Head of HR (part)
Jackie Schillinger, Clerk.

PART 1

Item	Content	Action
<p>1.</p> <p>1.1</p> <p>1.2</p> <p>1.3</p> <p>1.4</p>	<p>APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR</p> <p>The Clerk requested nominations for Chair of the committee for the 2016/17 academic year. Jon Furber was nominated and seconded. There were no other nominations and all were in favour.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Jon Furber is appointed as Chair of the committee for the 2016/17 academic year.</p> <p>The Chair proposed Elizabeth Harrison for the role of Vice Chair of the committee. Elizabeth Harrison was seconded for the role. There were no other nominations and all were in favour.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Elizabeth Harrison is appointed as Vice Chair of the committee for the 2016/17 academic year.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>The Chair welcome members, including Eddie Sims attending his first committee meeting, and college attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Sonia Belfield.</p>	

<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>The following interests were declared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jon Furber as a director of DART Limited and member of the North Shropshire College governing body; • Richard Ratcliffe as a director of DART Limited; • Meredydd David as a director of DART Limited; • Elizabeth Harrison as a member of the North Shropshire College governing body. <p>No conflict of the declared interests was expected to arise in relation to the content of the agenda items.</p>	
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p>	<p>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Part 1 of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2016 were received as a correct record, subject to the correction of a couple of typographical errors and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p>	<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p> <p>Health and Safety Report: Melvin Johnson presented the annual health and safety report. The committee noted a significant reduction in the total number of accidents and questioned the reasons behind the drop. This was considered to be a combination of more accurate reporting and health and safety practises becoming more embedded. In discussion, the following key points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The significant reduction in Equine was welcomed but the increase in RIDDOR reportable accidents queried. The detail of these incidents was discussed in more detail and the committee requested the detail of any RIDDOR accidents to be provided within the report in future; • Request for the data to be benchmarked against LANDEX colleges and reported back to the next meeting; • The student and staff survey question wording around feeling ‘safe’ be enhanced in future to make sure responses accurately reflect the health and safety aspects rather than campus security or safeguarding; • Agreement to enhance reporting of health and safety by requiring a summary report from the cross college health and safety and safeguarding committee to be made to the monthly Finance Senior Management Team meeting; • To put into practice by the end of the calendar year actions to promote a change in culture, such a health and safety ‘golden rules’ leaflet for all visitors to the college; • Confirmation that culture change activities are taking place, including staff going on learning walks with Heads of Departments and presentations by departments at cross college health and safety committee meetings, with next steps to develop students’ skills in carrying out dynamic risk assessment practice (ie applying the familiar processes to different/unfamiliar environments). <p>The following updated policies were considered and approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Policy 	<p>MEJ</p> <p>MEJ</p> <p>MEJ</p> <p>MEJ to check requirements</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Health and Safety Policy 	on review timetable
6.	FINANCIAL MONITORING	
6.1	<p>Year-end group financial reporting: the Director of Finance and Resources presented the draft financial statements. Members discussed the financial statements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall performance; • Impact of FRS102 and change due to the livestock valuation methodology; • The shift in and impact of the funding profile this year; • The recognition in the accounts of the existing stake in the ARLA co-operative; • Action to email to members the bridging report to the end of year position. 	GL
6.2	<p>The Director of Finance and Resources presented the Audit Completion with no concerns to report, other than some process issues that had delayed completion of the year end audit this year. These were discussed in more detail. The committee noted that partnership due diligence work and personnel issues had created capacity issues in the run up and during the audit, but that these issues were not on-going. They had been identified by management and managed in the best way possible in difficult circumstances. The committee wished to note its disappointment that the process had not gone as smoothly as usual, resulting in delayed reporting to the committee, but that it felt assured sufficient action had been taken to resolve the problems.</p>	
6.3	<p>Year-end financial reporting DART Limited: Members noted the DART accounts had been considered and approved that morning by the DART Limited board of directors, subject to an adjustment on goodwill write off. Members welcomed a strong performance by DART Limited.</p>	
6.4	<p>Period 3 Management accounts were received and considered.</p>	
6.5	<p>The recently received Skills Funding Agency financial health dashboard was shared with the committee for assurance, and would be circulated to all governors for information.</p>	JS
6.6	<p>RESOLVED: To recommend to the College Board approval of the Reaseheath College Group financial statements for the year ending 31 July 2016, subject to the agreed adjustment on the DART Limited goodwill position and some minor presentational changes.</p>	
7.	STUDENT NUMBERS AND FUNDING REPORT	
7.1	<p>Update on enrolments for 2016/17: the Vice Principal presented a summary of the FE, HE and apprenticeship student numbers reporting, highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the recruitment period September 2015 – September 2016, FE applications were very similar to previous year at circa 2,760. Our enrolment is 2,378 (all ages) which is 51 above our September 2015 intake. Our 16-18 target was 1,934 and we enrolled 1,965. We have seen 80 16-18 students withdraw in the first 6 weeks which means that we currently stand 50 below target at 1,884. We have the opportunity of increasing this headcount before the census date in January with further enrolments; • We have enrolled 413 FE students who are over 19 years old, which is a similar 	

7.2	<p>number to previous year;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our apprenticeship provision has seen an increase in allocation to £1.2m (£1.1m outturn last year). We have seen good enrolment in the summer months and require an average of 15 new starts per month to realise this allocation; • Our Work Based Learning (Other Provider Managed) has seen a shortfall on expected enrolment due to a smaller first year intake than anticipated; • Our schools' activity (KS4 and Vocational GCSE) are close to target with 89 enrolments from a target of 97. This has been supported through new partnership arrangements with 11 additional secondary schools; • In HE, application and recruitment to the directly funded courses for 2016/17 did not deliver enrolment numbers as expected; • Overall enrolments for the University of Chester provision, both franchised and directly funded, are up with new programmes such as the Canine Training and Behaviour course being very popular with applicants; • The bigger picture is that the loss when viewed in comparison to previous years is such that we hope to recover the loss in the new application cycle. • Marketing and publicising the new HE offer will be critical in the early stages of the 2017/18 application cycle. <p>Discussion followed, with the committee considering the shift in and impact of the college's funding profile in more detail. Key areas of discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management actions to drill down into the mix of provision and mitigating actions on funding; • The challenge of meeting allocation on apprenticeships due to less CITB numbers than expected, with details of actions to minimise any shortfall and assurance that the worst case scenario has been included in the budget; • The actions in place to tackle the shortfall in Equine in both HE and FE, with close executive monitoring put in place and recovery driven through quality and student satisfaction improvements; • Assurance that all areas of concern discussed have been factored into the ten year forecast and it will be this forecast that members will use when making decisions on the college capital projects; • Request for a presentation next time from the Head of Marketing on supporting the conversion rate of applicants. 	GF
8. 8.1	<p>HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT</p> <p>The Head of Human Resources presented her report, including an update, key statistical data and the results of the 2016 staff survey. The following areas were highlighted and discussed by the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on developments within the HR and Payroll team, progress against the HR area plan objectives and the key priorities for the next six months; • Key statistical data with statistics for the College against 4 key areas, taking into account previous feedback from the committee on data presentation and comparison: Headcount; Turnover; Recruitment; Absence; • Headcount has grown slightly. Turnover has started to settle and we have seen a clear reduction. Absence continues to be a key area of focus going forward and September has seen a peak in short term absence; • HR reporting starting to improve now thanks to support from Phase 3 to build some key reports. The next training in January will be focused on training the 	

	<p>whole team on business objects reporting now the data is in a format we can extract;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors are asked to engage with the Head of HR to explore ways to improve future reporting and to identify areas where they would benefit from more information; • All staff members were given the opportunity to complete the Staff Survey. The survey followed the same format as the 2015 Survey although there was an additional section on Health, Safety and Wellbeing and some slightly amended questions; • The overall response rate was 79%, slightly higher than last year, but similar to previous years. The data is based on responses over a July – September period, promoted via two Staff Development Days where space was built into the format of the day to allow completion of the survey; • College and Local engagement have again increased with a 2% increase in overall College engagement and a huge 9% increase in Local engagement, which is really positive. All engagement factors have once again seen an increase compared to last year; • Overall the staff survey has produced some really positive responses which demonstrate that it is certainly moving in the right direction. 90% of staff feel proud to be part of the college, and 84% would recommend it as a place to work; • Going forward though there are still some areas for improvement, which will enable us to build upon the success achieved so far and continue moving the College towards Outstanding: Wellbeing; Health and Safety culture; Training, Development and CPD; Individual areas for improvement; • The need for consistent scoring format in the survey going forwards, already identified as impacting on a small number of the new questions; • There will be a demonstration of the HR SharePoint page at the next committee meeting. 	
8.2	The committee thanked the Head of Human Resources for an excellent report and the continued improved reporting that she has been able to bring to the committee.	
9.	<p>MATTERS TO REPORT TO THE BOARD</p> <p>It was agreed that the following be reported to the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended approval of the Reaseheath Group Financial Statements for year ending 31 July 2016; • Approval of the updated Health and Safety Policy and Management of Health and Safety Policy; • Disappointment noted in process of college year end audit this year that resulted in delay but assurance that issues are not on-going; • Reference to the SFA financial health dashboard considered in the meeting, for assurance; • Risk and planned management actions on student numbers. 	
10.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>The Director of Finance and Resources updated members on the on-going work with external auditors, initiated by the college, to clarify the treatment of VAT in relation to the college exemption and DART Limited.</p>	

11.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 16 February 2017 at 1pm.	
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The meeting closed at 4.05pm

SIGNED:

DATED: