

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 February 2017 at 1pm
Committee Room, Reaseheath Hall**

Present: Sonia Belfield
Malcolm Burns
Meredydd David
Jon Furber (Chair)
Elizabeth Harrison
Eddie Sims

In attendance: Melvin Johnson, Health and Safety Manager (*items 1 - 4*)
Graeme Lavery, Director of Finance and Resources
Dave Kynaston, Vice Principal (*items 1 – 14*)
Louise Woodman, Head of HR (*items 1- 10*)
Jackie Schillinger, Clerk.

PART A

Item	Content	Action
1.	<p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Richard Ratcliffe, who was attending a funeral.</p>	
2.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>2.1 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; • Meredydd David as a director of DART Limited and a member of the University of Chester Council; • Elizabeth Harrison as a member of the North Shropshire College governing body. <p>2.2 There was no expectation of a conflict of interest arising in relation to the content of the agenda, with no decision-making required at the meeting in relation to any declared interests.</p>	

<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Part A of the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2016 were approved as a correct record (subject to the correction of a typographical error in section 8.1) and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The following matters arising were considered: 5.2: The clerk confirmed that the Health and Safety policies would continue to be reviewed an annual basis alongside the annual health and safety report to the board.</p>	
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p>	<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p> <p>The Health and Safety Manager presented the Health and Safety Monitoring Report, including a compliance audit on the college estate that provided clear assurance. Members questioned and sought clarification on the monitoring report in the discussion that followed, as set out below.</p> <p>Action Plan: Members probed on the progress made on the development of ‘golden rules’ for visitors, as well as staff and students, to promote culture change. The Health and Safety Manager showed members the visitor leaflet that college visitors now receive, which contains key health and safety behaviour information. A ‘golden rules’ card for staff and students is expected to be finalised within the next week. The committee requested that the action plan report indicates a level of confidence in future against the ‘in progress’ actions, with a milestone timeline. The committee also requested assurance that robust monitoring is in place, with the agreed action for the Health and Safety Manager to report on the full action plan to the monthly Senior Management Team meetings (Finance Planning and Monitoring SMT).</p> <p>Accident statistics: Total accidents have reduced. This was seen as a combination of the impact of the cross college Health and Safety Committee, the health and safety ‘walk by’ process by managers in their departments and a stronger near miss reporting process in place. The committee welcomed the reduction in Equine accidents, following hard work and focus by managers in the department. More team sports within the Sports programmes has led to an increase in sports injuries. The committee stressed the Health and Safety Executive’s focus in relation to sports injuries and the need to continue to ensure well-maintained sports facilities. Benchmark information requested by the committee at its previous meeting is in progress with a Landex benchmarking tool available in May, to be reported back to the committee. RIDDOR reported accidents have reduced in Equine, welcomed by the committee. The committee reiterated its request to see the detail of all RIDDOR reported accidents in the report. The Health and Safety Manager will ensure this is included in his next report.</p> <p>Near miss reporting: The committee welcomed the focus on near miss reporting that has improved recently, but with still more work to do to ensure that it is comprehensive. The committee agreed that it would expect to see more near misses reported. The use of ‘near miss cards’ was discussed along with possible digital alternatives to make it easier for students to report. The committee emphasised the importance of near miss reporting by staff and students to achieve the desired culture change in health and safety</p>	<p>CMJ to state when checks done in audit report</p> <p>CMJ add milestones to report for next time.</p> <p>CMJ monthly action plan report to SMT.</p> <p>CMJ report benchmarking data to committee. CMJ – RIDDOR detail in next report.</p>

4.5	<p>behaviour.</p> <p>Equine: The committee considered the measures put in place to deal with an increase in accidents reported to the previous committee meeting. Whilst the actions taken were having the desired impact in reducing accidents, the committee also recommended a real focus on any root causes. Discussion included induction and support for inexperienced riders and the committee recommended this as a key area for ongoing focus.</p> <p><i>Melvin Jonson left the meeting</i></p>	
5.	<p>HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT</p> <p>The Head of Human Resources presented the human resources report as well as demonstrating the new HR site on the college SharePoint. Members welcomed the improved data reporting capabilities evident in the report and the progress on improving accessibility to HR information on the intranet. They thanked the Head of HR and her team for their work. In discussion on the HR reporting, the following areas were questioned and scrutinised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR team: structure and consideration of payroll models including outsourcing and hybrid model; • HR KPIs: Checking headcount growth figures shown in the data and an explanation in the variance in headcount over the year. A welcome fall in staff turnover again, to well within the AoC benchmarks. The data provides assurance on safer recruiting processes. Short-term sickness absence is a focus, with actions building on the college wellbeing strategy showing an impact on stress and anxiety related absences, with further work still to be done. 	
6.	<p>STUDENT NUMBERS AND FUNDING REPORT</p> <p>6.1 The Vice Principal provided the committee with an update on in year retention and applications for FE, Apprenticeships and HE. The changing student number profile was discussed. The committee sought and received assurance on management actions to manage the impact of the downturn in 16–18 year old learners (with no impact on funding this year but with an impact on funding in 2017/18 year) and the short-term uncertainties around apprenticeship funding. Retention in FE was reported as positive at this stage of the year, though the experience of more cases of poor student behaviour at levels 1 and 2 was seen as a risk to retention by academic year-end. Members expressed their support for maintaining the high behaviour expectations at Reaseheath even if this meant losing more students than usual to disciplinary outcomes. Applications for next year across FE and HE were reported to be positive overall, with discussion in the meeting focused on those individual subject areas looking less positive, as well an internal progression in HE. The committee welcomed the information that firm HE acceptances are significantly up on this time last year. The committee sought and received assurance that the financial plan contained prudent assumptions on numbers for next year, in line with a realistic slight drop in numbers.</p> <p>6.2 The Vice Principal presented the marketing report, tabled at the meeting, with apologies from the report’s author the Head of Marketing, who was unable to attend the meeting. The report provided an up to date picture of the main recruitment</p>	<p>JS add to SharePoint after the</p>

	<p>challenges and actions in place to support recruitment and conversion of applications. It was supplemented by on screen information showing key actions taken to promote conversion of applicants. Discussion on further possible ways to improve conversion followed, including innovative use of digital media, with the acknowledgement that the college is already using these resources very well with a very strong digital footprint evident in a recent survey. Members supported the need for the college to consider unconditional offers to certain HE applicants as well as ensuring that offers of accommodation are available as early in the application year as possible. Members welcomed the clear reporting by the Head of Marketing and expressed their support for the strong team in place that had responded very well to the challenge of increasing applicant conversion.</p>	meeting.
7.	<p>FINANCIAL MONITORING</p> <p>The Director of Finance and Resources presented the Period 5 management accounts and provided an update on Period 6, indicating a good level of confidence in meeting the budget forecast. The committee discussed the ways in which the college is closely managing the budget to ensure that the significant shifts in funding income streams are anticipated and well managed. These include close monitoring of staffing costs, with weekly test and challenge of staffing requisitions by the executive team and management actions to manage any timing pinch points in cash position due to the ongoing capital projects and transfer of debt banking arrangements. The committee Chair raised a question on the payroll deductions creditor figure on the period 5 management accounts, which the Director of Finance and Resources agreed to check and revert to the Chair after the meeting. He assured the committee that all payroll payments were fully up to date. The Director of Finance and Resources emphasised that any committee member could contact him outside of meetings at any time with any questions at all on the detail of the accounts or other financial matters. The committee welcomed the debtor data in the accounts, showing that the finance team currently manages debtors well.</p>	GL revert to JF for explanation of movement in payroll deductions creditor
8.	<p>MATTERS TO REPORT TO THE BOARD</p> <p>There were no matters to recommend for approval. The committee agreed to highlight in particular the financial risks of the changes to apprenticeship funding and the significant shift in funding streams in general due to the changing external environment and that the committee is satisfied that management are anticipating and managing these risks well within prudent financial planning.</p>	
9.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no other business reported to the meeting.</p>	
10.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Friday 23 June 2017 at 9.30am</p>	

The meeting closed at 3.45pm

Signed:

Dated: