

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 23 June 2017 at 9.30am
Committee Room, Reaseheath Hall

Present: Sonia Belfield
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
Louise Woodman, Head of HR
Jackie Schillinger, Clerk.

PART A

| Item | Content | Action |
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| 1. | <p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were received from the Vice Principal.</p> | |
| 2. 2.1 | <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; • Meredydd David as a director of DART Limited and a member of the University of Chester Council; • Richard Ratcliffe as a director of DART Limited; • Elizabeth Harrison as a member of the North Shropshire College governing body and in relation to a piece of research carried out with relevance to item 7. | |

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| 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. | |
| 3. | <p>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>3.1 Part A of the minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising.</p> | |
| 4. | <p>HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT</p> <p>The Head of Human Resources presented her report. Members welcomed the improved data reporting capabilities evident in the report and 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"> • Systems development and the people management dashboard capabilities with use of the icloud and assurance on cyber security, with an internal audit in the audit plan for 2017-18 academic year; • Staff development activity, including further prevent training at the staff development day in July and a critical incident lockdown drill planned. Further critical incident drills would follow with fire health and safety a priority for early next term. Confirmation was provided that a review of fire safety including cladding and composite materials was currently being carried out and the issue also addressed with contractors for the new builds planned and with College insurers; • Outsourcing of payroll had been considered but keeping the roll in-house was seen as better value and a new payroll assistant had recently been recruited; • A task and finish group is responsible for ensuring the College is ready for the new Data protection requirements for the introduction of the GDPR in May 2018 and is supported by internal audit with an audit planned early next academic year; • Gender pay reporting is being developed with reference to the recently published AoC Code of Conduct and will be reported to the next Committee meeting. The commentary that goes with it is crucial and the College can call on the support of the governor with HR expertise to review/assist; • Managing attendance is still a focus but it moving forward, with data availability a big step forwards; | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR statistics from April to April including growth, turnover, sickness absence, stress absence and long term absence. Exit interview data was considered and reasons for staff turnover scrutinised. Assurance was taken from the work undergone to unpick the statistics and the significant amount of staff resource built in to the 2017-18 budget and targeted appropriately. | |
| 5. | HEALTH AND SAFETY | |
| 5.1 | The Health and Safety Manager presented the Health and Safety Monitoring Report. Members welcomed the inclusion of the extra detail requested at the last meeting. Members questioned and sought clarification on the monitoring report in the discussion that followed, as set out below. | |
| 5.2 | <p>Action Plan:</p> <p>Members requested that any partially completed items provide an indication of why not and when these will be completed. Details of the staff and student golden rules wallet card were shared, with governors receiving one when they attend the Board meeting in July.</p> | |
| 5.3 | <p>Accident statistics:</p> <p>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. Team sports accidents have not reduced and further work is needed to understand how best to impact this area. RIDDOR position is better than last year but still room for improvement, with an explanation of the different between RIDDOR classification for students and staff providing context to the figures. The lessons learnt from a recent RIDDOR relating to ladder use were shared and assurance provided on training and procedures. Legal training on the importance and impact of health and safety requirements was suggested for key management staff. The annual Health and Safety report in the Autumn term should include a section on health and safety training delivered and received during the year.</p> | |
| 5.4 | The Committee Chair thanked the Health and Safety Manager for his contribution to the Committee and the College during his career and wished him all the best on his retirement. The Committee thanked him for his offer to support the College on an interim basis if needed until his replacement is recruited. | |
| 6. | FINANCIAL MONITORING | |
| 6.1 | Management Accounts: The Director of Finance and Resources presented the Period 9 management accounts, indicating a good level of confidence in meeting | |

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| | <p>the budget forecast. The Committee welcomed the good position reported. It requested a 'prior year' table on the first page to aid a quick comparison. A number of queries on the detail were raised and answered, with one query to be followed up outside the meeting. The Committee noted that if merger does not go ahead with North Shropshire College there will be sunken costs of £250k that will hit this year's outturn. There will also be a technical deficit due to the bank break cost on transfer of debt banking, but that this will not affect the College's financial health status. Assurance was provided in relation to the CapEx costs in Schedule 11 that these items were progressing.</p> <p>6.2 Provisional Budget for 2017/18: The Director of Finance and Resources presented the provisional budget for discussion. He explained the process of management scrutiny so far and the confidence of management to present a good solid budget to the Committee. He confirmed that the full ten year forecast, cash flow and balance sheet will go to the forthcoming full Board meeting for consideration. The Committee received assurance that the movement to monthly staff establishment reporting will provide greater accuracy on pay spend going forwards. The risk on apprenticeship income was queried in the light of current funding uncertainties and assurance received that the income targets were considered achievable in this context and were not completely reliant on generating new business. The Committee confirmed that it was satisfied that the budget was robust and prudent, and subject to consideration of the ten year forecast at the Board meeting, were able to recommend the budget for approval.</p> <p>6.3 RESOLVED: To recommend the provisional budget to the Board for approval.</p> <p>6.4 College Insolvency Regime: A slide presentation on the incoming insolvency regime and its impact on governor liability was provided for information.</p> | |
| <p>7.</p> | <p>FUNDING AND STUDENT NUMBERS REPORT</p> <p>The Principal provided the committee with an update on end of year forecasts covering EFA, Apprenticeships, AEB, Advanced Learner Loans, Other provider managed contracts and schools. The Committee note the management actions taken over the year to manage the student numbers and funding risks that have brought in the good outturn shown in the management accounts. Assurance was taken on the good applications data for 2017/18. The small number of areas for concern on applications were discussed, with updates provided on numbers and viability decisions to be taken.</p> | |
| <p>8.</p> | <p>SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Committee reviewed its performance in the context of the continuing and significant amount of strategic work undertaken by the governing body in</p> | |

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| | <p>2016/17 due to the implementation of the area review process. It considered its performance against its responsibilities in its Terms of Reference. It also considered its performance against the section of the College's Governance Development Plan for 2016/17, within its remit, as set out below:</p> <p>Objective: <i>Ensure the priority focus is on identifying and managing strategic risks in overseeing the financial strategy for the capital projects and the implementation of the new ventures.</i></p> <p>Success Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>College capital strategy is implemented to maximise the opportunities but with an agreed approach to risk that ensures an affordable financial strategy and plans which are compatible with the duty to ensure sustainability and solvency of the college.</i> • <i>Successful next stage to collaboration with NSC</i> <p>Following discussion, the Committee considered it has fulfilled its Terms of Reference in 2016/17 and provided proactive and constructive test and challenge in relation to the governance development plan objective.</p> | |
| 9. | <p>MATTERS TO REPORT TO THE BOARD</p> <p>The Committee recommended the provisional budget to the Board for approval.</p> | |
| 10. | <p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>The Director of Finance and Resources reported that the new Head of Finance had started and would be able to attend the next meeting to meet members.</p> | |
| 11. | <p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Friday 24 November 2017 at 1pm.</p> | |

The meeting closed at 12pm

Signed:

Dated: