

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 8th October 2008 at 4.30 p.m. in the Deben Room, Farmhouse Business Centre at Otley College.

Present: Linda Cropley (Chair)
John Clements
Martin Holmes
Jane Rabagliati
Robin Vickers
Philip Winfield

In Attendance: Mike Wainwright (Head of Finance)
Rosanne Wijnberg (Vice Principal Business and Corporate Services)
Stephen Holley (FE Associates)
Arthur Hicks (Clerk)

FGP **Apologies and Welcome**

8.98 Apologies were received from, Barry FitzGerald and Jenny Milsom. The Chair welcomed Stephen Holley as an observer.

FGP **Disclosures of Interest**

8.99 There were no disclosures of Interest.

FGP **Timing of the Agenda and Items of Other Business**

8.100 The Principal advised of an additional item of business; the agenda was agreed.

FGP **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

8.101 The minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2008 were received, agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

FGP **Matters Arising from those Minutes**

8.102 Members were advised that all the recommendations made by the Committee were approved by Corporation at their meeting of the 16th July 2008.

Minute F&GP 8.95 – Training Needs. The Clerk advised there had been no notifications of training needs identified by Governors. Suitable training opportunities were being monitored and members would be advised when they arose.

FGP **Accommodation Group**

8.103 Robin Vickers gave a brief summary of the meeting of the Accommodation Sub-group which had taken place prior to the meeting. He advised that issues around the floor of the Equine indoor arena and doors in the Learning Resources Centre had been resolved. The Learning Resource Centre 12 months defects had also been completed and the final payments made to the contractor. The building had been completed £40k

under the agreed budget which had increased the contingency amount available to complete other works. Members considered the latest costs associated with the Capital Bid and noted that this was almost complete. The group had received a report on the drains infrastructure and as a result agreed to release the contingency for further improvements to the car parks. The Sub-Group had received a report from the Carbon Trust in respect of power use; the report contained a number of improvement actions which were being addressed through the College Sustainability Committee.

The report was received.

FGP **Learner Funding 2007/08**

8.104 Rosanne Wijnberg presented the final report on Learner numbers along with the LSC Reconciliation Statement for 2007/08 End of Year Estimate. Members noted that funding targets had been achieved with minor variance between the total LSC allocation and the College out turn and that there would be no claw back of the Recurrent Grant.

The report was considered and received.

FGP **Learner Recruitment 2008/09**

8.105 Rosanne Wijnberg presented a report on behalf of Jenny Milsom which detailed learner recruitment for 2008/09 at College and Departmental level. Members compared progress against the internal College targets contained in the report which were based on the funding information currently available and noted that full details of the Learning Aims Database (LAD) had not yet been received from the LSC.

The report was considered and received.

FGP **Management Accounts 2007/08**

8.106 Mike Wainwright presented the management accounts containing details of the actual income and expenditure to the year ending 31st July 2008. Income and expenditure was discussed along with the variances against budget. Members were pleased to note the positive out turn and cash position when compared to the same period in 2006/07. They stressed the need to maintain the strong controls which were implemented during the year; these were believed to be instrumental in delivering the improved result.

The accounts were considered and received.

FGP **Members Report and Financial Statements 2007/08**

8.107 Rosanne Wijnberg presented the first draft of the Members Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31st July 2008. Members were advised that the report is based on the 'Casterbridge' model which is the preferred format of the LSC. The report was presented in order for Governors to have the opportunity to comment. It was agreed that Members would feed back comments directly to Mike Wainwright who was co-ordinating the report.

The report was received.

FGP
8.108 **Management Accounts 2008/09**
Mike Wainwright presented an abbreviated version of the management accounts for September 2008 and advised that this was early in the year for accounts to be produced; fuller accounts would be presented in future.

Governors received assurances that the College investment policy was being implemented and a prudent option was being maintained.

The report was received.

FGP
8.109 **Staffing Establishment**
The Committee received a paper on the staffing establishment comparing departmental pay costs against budget. The variances between the original budget forecasts and the outcomes were discussed.

The report was considered and received.

FGP
8.110 **Bad Debt**
Members considered a report on unrecoverable bad debt and heard how the College had been unable to collect unpaid tuition fees of a student despite obtaining judgement through the County Courts. Following due consideration **it was resolved:**

To approve that the debt be written off.

FGP
8.111 **Directors and Officers Liability Insurance**
The Clerk presented a paper confirming the renewal of the Insurance policy with effect from the first of August 2008. Members noted the indemnity limit had been increased to £3,000,000 being the total aggregate for all loss arising out of all claims during the period of the insurance. Governors received assurance that College brokers had confirmed the security of the policy in the current market and that the indemnity limit was sufficient to cover the potential risk.

The report was received.

FGP
8.112 **Risk Management**
Arthur Hicks presented the High Risk Register containing the high risks associated with Finance and General Purposes and Accommodation Committees. He advised that a further risk associated with the College dependence on LSC income is currently being assessed for inclusion in the register. The Committee discussed the risks.

The report was considered and received.

FGP
8.113 **Any Other Business**
One items of other business was raised.

FGP
8.114 **Strategic Review**
The Principal advised that he and Jenny Milsom had met with Robin Vickers to consider the development of the action plan towards meeting the Grant Thornton 'Match Fit' criteria. The question of additional involvement of Grant Thornton had been agreed at the strategy meeting on the 24th September 2008. **After due consideration it was resolved:**

To approve an expenditure of £7.5K exclusive of VAT for the initial consultation with Grant Thornton.

Rosanne Wijnberg

The Chair noted that this was the last meeting which Rosanne Wijnberg would attend in her role as Vice Principal Business and Corporate Services. She gave best wishes to Rosanne on behalf of the Committee and thanked for her contribution in implementing the strong financial controls now being demonstrated within the College.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 6.20 p.m.

FGP
8.115 **Date and Time of the Next Meeting**
Wednesday 3rd December 2008 at 4.30 pm

Arthur Hicks
Clerk to the Corporation
October 2008