



**MINUTES OF THE TRC
RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING**

MONDAY 16 JUNE 2014

PART I

PRESENT

Mr P Jagger MBE (Chair); Dr P R Williams; Mr J Ellis; Mr S Kirk, Mr T Grice.

In Attendance:

Ms A J Oaks, Clerk to TRC Corporation

Mr M Patterson, Vice Principal Finance & Resources

APOLOGIES

14.21 There were no apologies received.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

14.22 Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests and reserved the right to declare an interest at any stage of the meeting. Mr Grice declared an interest in Agenda item 7 due to his membership of the Rotherham Hockey Club.

MINUTES

14.23 The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2014 (Part I) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

14.24 Members received a list of actions arising from previous meetings, noting these related to reports on the Agenda.

EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

LGPS Employers' Statement

14.25 The Committee received the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2014: Employer Statement of Discretionary Policies dated 2 June 2014. The College's policy in previous years had determined there would be no pension enhancement for staff due to the financial cost to the College. It was therefore proposed the Policy remain unchanged.

RESOLVED 14.25 to note the LGPS Employer Statement and to recommend approval of the College's policy in this respect.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

14.26 The Principal introduced the report, informing the Committee that the Policy had been revised following new government guidance issued in the Spring. Details of the revisions were provided, which included the provision for any staff to make a referral. The Principal provided details of the arrangements that were being put in place to ensure Child protection and safeguarding matters at the highest level were maintained, due to the relevant member of SMT leaving at the end of term. S Kirk commented that the College had excellent safeguarding procedures in place and that it was imperative to maintain this standard and the College's reputation in respect of such matters. He

added that as link Governor for Safeguarding, he had recently attended the Safeguarding Committee meeting and was very content with the College's proposal regarding the new arrangements.

RESOLVED 14.26 to recommend the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy be approved.

SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT

- 14.27 The Committee received the Annual Report for Safeguarding 2013/14 which summarised training provided to staff during the year. 48 concerns from staff of a safeguarding nature had been reported, 4 of which had been the subject of referrals. Work undertaken by the Safeguarding Committee, which had met twice during the year, was summarised. Governors were provided with details of the areas where there had been an increase in CP issues and informed of the actions being taken by the College to address these and support vulnerable young people.
- 14.28 Discussion took place on specific areas where there had been an increase in incidents, particularly the rise in mental health issues. Noting the small number of students at risk of forced marriage, Governors asked for further information in this regard given the announcement today that this practice would become illegal. The Principal stated that a great deal of information was provided to students on this issue and staff were appropriately trained and aware of the potential risk. However extended summer overseas visits presented a risk to vulnerable students and was an area the college would continue to monitor.

The Report was noted and received.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Management Account May 2014

- 14.29 The Accounts for May indicated a total deficit of £227,873. The VP F&R summarised the key variances. Catering surplus and Sports surplus were £25,061 and £49,310 respectively. Earlier in the week a letter from the FE Commissioner sharing his thoughts on some of the financial challenges that colleges are facing and how they could be addressed had been circulated to all Colleges and passed on to all members of the Corporation to raise awareness.

Following an observation by T Grice with regard to the staff to income ratio, the VP F&R explained that it was difficult to make a direct comparison between SFCs and GFEs because of the differences with regard to pay rates, extra funding for materials and cost of contracted out services in GFEs. In terms of comparisons, the College's staff to income ratio was currently 78% against the average SFC of 75%-80%. A national report published today had indicated 48% of Colleges in the sector were reporting losses, particularly SFCs and that achieving a trading surplus was no longer a viable option. The Chair commented that the content of the letter had been pertinent to all in the sector, and timely, and that he would be meeting with the Principal to discuss ways in which the Corporation could make a considered and positive response to it. Further discussion with regard to the College's strategic options would be the subject of the Full Corporation meeting on 7 July 2014. He thanked members for the points raised, which had helped significantly towards the forthcoming debate.

The Management Accounts were received.

FINANCIAL PLAN 2014/2017

- 14.30 The Three Year Financial plan was presented for consideration and discussion. The Plan and associated commentary had been prepared alongside the College's strategic and operational plans and was linked to the Risk management and Disaster plans. Appropriate adjustments had been made to show changes in areas of provision, growth and funding. The VP F&R highlighted key points for Governors' information, particularly areas that would impact on future years' income and cost reduction measures already implemented. In terms of growth, a drop of 3.2% was forecast for 2014/15 based on final funding allocations and number of student applications. Future years' student numbers were based on estimates using local demographics and impact of new Sixth Forms opening. With funding uncertainties, the figures assumed no further funding cuts, which, if announced, would

require further savings in the region £200,000-£300,000 to be achieved. The Plan set out the College's proposals in this respect.

- 14.31 Following questions from Governors, discussion took place with regard to the courses most at risk of being withdrawn if student numbers were not viable. It was noted that Music was a particularly important part of the College's curriculum and that it would be significantly detrimental to the College and community if it were to be withdrawn. The Principal indicated that he would be meeting the Head of Rawmarsh School at a future Secondary Heads meeting to ensure that TRC had a presence there for those students wanting to study A levels. Further discussion took place with regard to the College's marketing strategy and use of social media; members recognising the need for the College to be more innovative in order to attract a greater number of students. It was proposed that the Marketing officer be invited to the next Resources Committee meeting to provide an overview of the strategy.
- 14.32 The VP F&R referred to the forecast, highlighting restructuring costs and likely costs associated with a potential ill-health retirement. Governors expressed concern that it was necessary to recommend a deficit budget to the Corporation and sought further assurance of action being taken by management to improve the financial position within a reasonable timescale. It was acknowledged that until 2020 the demographics were not helpful, and various ways of increasing income and growth such as using the college's assets to best advantage and not ruling out international provision remained worthy of further exploration. The VP F&R asked Governors to note that the grant and income from the all-weather hockey pitch had not been factored into the budget. Despite the funding cuts, the College wished to implement the national living wage proposals and intended to increase the hourly rate for cleaners to £6.80. A 1% pay award for all staff, if implemented, would cost the College £50,000. Both proposals were supported by Governors. In terms of the Funding body's scoring of the College's financial health, this remained 'Good'.
- 14.33 To conclude, the Chairman thanked the VP F&R for a comprehensive and detailed report. He also thanked Governors for the constructive debate, which had incorporated a good level of challenge to management. He added that the Corporation must respond to the proposed Plan in a positive way in order to maintain the College's viability in the current and future years, and that a full discussion would take place at the Full Corporation meeting on 7 July 2014.

RESOLVED 14.33.1 That the Financial Plan for 2014/15 to 2016/17 as presented be recommended to the Full Corporation for approval.

RESOLVED 14.33.2 That the Marketing Strategy be reviewed at the next Resources committee meeting and the Marketing Officer be invited to the meeting.

TUITION FEES POLICY

- 14.34 The Committee received a revised Fees Policy for consideration. Minor amendments included the addition of students eligible for reduced or no tuition fees: 16-18 with an existing B-C grade in English or Maths wishing to improve their grade, students new to TRC, and re-sits. The Principal would continue to use his discretion to vary the policy and waive fees for a student in exceptional circumstances.

RESOLVED 14.34 That the Tuition Fees Policy for 2014/15 be recommended to the Full Corporation for approval.

COURSE FEES 2014/15

- 14.35 The Committee received a paper setting out the proposed fees for 2014/15 for all courses which was in line with government rules on fee exemptions and funding.

RESOLVED 14.35 That the Course Fees for 2014/15 be recommended to the Full Corporation for approval.

VFM 2014/15 ACTION PLAN AND 2013/14 REPORT

- 14.36 A report was presented to the Committee to allow its oversight of the efficient and effective use of resources, solvency of the institution and safeguarding the Corporation's assets. In terms of measuring VFM, equal weight was applied to economy, quality and reliability. The VFM Action plan had been circulated to Governors for consideration. During 2013/14 the VFM reviews undertaken included support staff costs, identifying further costs savings for 14/15; the Tutorial system, a new system of which would be implemented in 14/15; and the IT network pilot, the outcomes of which had been reported to the Committee previously. For 2014/15, specific VFM reviews would focus on the Tutorial system, shared serviced/staffing structures and student course loads.

RESOLVED 14.36 To note the Action plan for 2014/15 and recommend for approval.

ACCOMMODATION PROJECT UPDATE

- 14.37 Mr Grice's declaration of interest was noted. It was agreed that Mr Grice would not take part in the discussion but may remain in the meeting.
- 14.38 The Report provided the historical background to the IT Network upgrade projects and the All-weather Hockey pitch project. In respect of the former, the College had successfully accessed EFA IT capital funding of £50,000 towards the costs of the Wi-Fi installation, approved by the Corporation in 2013. Following evaluation of tenders, European Electronique had been appointed to supply the equipment at a cost of £85,000. The grant had allowed the College to opt for quality and reliability whilst staying within budget. It was noted that the upgrade was vitally important to the development of teaching, learning and assessment, and linked to the TLA strategy.
- 14.39 The VP F&R provided an update on the all-weather hockey pitch. An application (stage one) had been submitted to England Hockey, with a decision expected June or July 2014. If successful a stage two application would be required, together with full applications to Sport England and the Hockey Foundation. Further, a planning permission application would be made late summer, in line with terms approved by the Full Corporation in April 2014. The benefits to the College of securing the funding had been noted in previous meetings.

The Report was noted and received.

HEALTH AND SAFETY: Accident Statistics

- 14.40 The Committee received an analysis of accidents at the College up to 13/5/14 and remedial measures implemented to mitigate further risk. It was noted that none of the accidents had any need for further management follow up.

The report was noted and received.

RESOURCES COMMITTEE ANNUAL SELF ASSESSMENT

- 14.41 Governors were reminded to complete the annual self-assessment template for evaluation purposes.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.42 The next meeting would be held on Monday 6 October 2014 at 5.30 pm.

End of Part I

Signed _____ (Chair)

Dated _____