

## Minutes of the Corporation Resources Committee Meeting – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at 6pm

### Present

Mr J F Bingham (JFB) (Chairman), Mr J F B Clark (JFBC), Mrs Rachelle Hill (RH), Mr Z Nazir (ZN), Mrs J Powell (JP), Dr J Stevens (JS), Dr P R Williams (RW)

### In attendance

Mr M Patterson (MP), Mrs L Clark (LC) (Clerk)

### Actions

#### 1 Apologies for absence

Mrs W Meehan (WM), Mrs K Stevens (KS), Mr J C Wainwright (JCW)

(meeting quorate)

#### 2 Declaration of interests

No interests were declared in respect of agenda items; however, members reserved the right to declare an interest at any stage of the meeting.

#### 3 Minutes dated 9<sup>th</sup> May 2012

The minutes of 9<sup>th</sup> May 2012 were approved with no amendment.

#### 4 Matters Arising

The missing safety rail requires further investigation.

JFB /  
JCW

LC has spoken to the insurers regarding the query at the last meeting as to the college's responsibility should a lead thief fall from the roof and suffer serious injury or death. The college would be covered by the public liability element of the insurance policy which has no particular conditions attached to it as long as the college has acted reasonably. I.e. if there was a particular roof which would collapse if stood on then a sign should be erected. MP confirmed there are no such roofs.

Members noted that all other actions had been resolved or were agenda items.

#### 5 Estate and Project Matters

##### 5.1 New projects and updates on approved ongoing projects

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting.

###### 1. External Lights

There is no update on this, all actions are ongoing.

###### 2. IT Network Upgrades 2013 & 2014

MP explained that the servers have been installed for 5 years now and replacements need to be considered and therefore he is proposing a wider review of the IT provisions with a view to presenting a more detailed paper to the Resources committee in the autumn/winter. MP suggested that initially a consultant will be employed to give initial advice at no cost and then based on this it may be necessary to employ an independent consultant at a cost to undertake a more detailed review.

MP is also currently looking into the use of 'tablets' for students as the cost of these items is reducing and this has to be balanced against the current costs of photocopying, books, IT equipment.

The committee discussed MP's proposal and agreed that an independent review of the IT network upgrades should be undertaken, with a full report to the committee in autumn / winter. MP

### 3. Roof Repairs

A large number of old chimney units which had been covered over with felt, are now leaking and urgently need to be replaced. The options are to replace the felt with a fiberglass covering which would last for about 30 years at a cost of approximately £15,000, or to drop the chimney height to roof level and tile over them. MP is due to receive costings on the second option shortly and will report back to the committee once received. MP

**The committee noted the paper as presented.**

## 6 Financial Matters

### 6.1 Management Accounts May 2012 (inc departmental accounts)

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting commenting that there are no major areas to highlight. The departmental budgets had been frozen but on the whole many had underspent. Catering and Sports Centre were still doing very well.

JFB queried the figures relating to Geography field trip. MP explained that currently the college provides 50% of the cost so therefore a deficit is shown, however as of next year the college will not be contributing towards the cost unless the student is eligible for the bursary fund in which case they will receive 100% funding for the trip. Departments are looking to reduce the costs of field trips to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by the loss of funding for such trips.

**The committee accepted the May 2012 Management Accounts as presented and recommended them to the full Corporation for approval.**

### 6.2 Financial Plans 2012/13 – 2014/15

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting and provided additional detail on a number of areas;

- Page 8. The plans had been prepared two weeks ago and there are still outstanding decisions to be made by the funding body which will affect the figures. The deficit will be approximately £270k (a range of savings have been

identified as at one point the deficit was likely to be in the region of £470k). The key is ensuring that enrolments increase and indications from induction days and an increase in applications are a positive sign. The college is running a number of additional bus services (JP declared an interest at this point) to ensure students can access college.

- Page 8. It had been previously agreed that the salary ration would be increased above 76%.
- Page 8. Capital expenditure is shown to increase but this is a very approximate figure for the IT work.
- Page 13. There will be no pay rise for staff next year. RW commented that the SFCF have made a zero % offer to the unions. The only proposed increase in salary is for cleaners, although members agreed that this would be classed as a recalculation of cleaners pay in light of the market conditions in Rotherham. Other colleges and the hospital pay a higher hourly rate than college currently do and recently a few cleaners have left. MP proposed an increase from £6.39 to £6.50 an hour. JP queried if a 'loyalty bonus' for longevity of service was an option but it was agreed that this was not possible as it would not apply to all staff.
- Schedule 4. In 2012 the college's financial health grade was assessed as 'outstanding.' JFB commented that the college and the board are managing the financial situation to the best of our ability and at this point there was no concern that this rating would drop to 'good' for 2013.

JFB raised a number of queries;

- Page 2. The wording of the second bullet point should be changed to reflect the fact that it is compulsory 'education, training or work' for 17 year olds, not just compulsory education.
- Page 3. Amend the wording of the third bullet point to how the college intends to 'maintain' awareness to staff.
- Page 5. Increased competition from the opening up of the post 16 market should be included.
- Page 7, B6. The estates plan requires updating with regards to the cricket pavilion which will not be moving forwards within the next 3 years.
- The caretakers house – this was discussed by the committee at this point, but minutes are shown under agenda item 6.6.

MP referred to appendix A which had been distributed prior to the meeting summarising the key points. Depending on the funding methodology decision there could be more savings made.

**The committee accepted the Financial Plans 2012/13 – 2014/15 as presented with the above amendments and recommended them to the full Corporation for MP approval.**

### 6.3 Pensions Policy

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting explaining that the college had always had a statement regarding support staff pensions but the Chair

had asked for this to be formalised in a policy. One amendment to refer to the pension as 'The South Yorkshire Pension Scheme' was suggested.

MP

**The committee accepted the Pensions Policy as presented with the above amendment and recommended them to the full Corporation for approval.**

#### **6.4 2012/13 VFM Action Plan and 2011/12 Report**

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting providing additional detail with reference to section 3.

Support Staff – A report containing more detail on the proposed apprenticeship scheme, as requested by the Audit committee, will be an agenda item at the Corporation meeting.

MP

Funding Methodology – A national decision on funding is still awaited. It is likely that funding will be per student rather than per qualification and if this is the case then the proposal would be to remove General Studies as a compulsory subject. Current L6 students will be given the option of whether they wish to continue in U6 on a general studies course. Next year L6 students could be given the option of whether they wish to study general studies in the U6 year if they require the points for their university course. However, the current university tariff system is changing and therefore students may be even more unlikely to opt in for general studies.

IT network – as outlined in agenda item 5.1 this is an ongoing item.

MP also summarised section 4 of the report. RW informed members that a number of factors are considered when choosing exam boards including curriculum and grades.

**The committee noted the paper as presented.**

#### **6.5 Fees Policy and 2012/13 Fees**

MP referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting commenting that the report remained relatively unchanged from last year apart from section 13 whereby students undertaking non-compulsory work experience that requires a CRB check will be required to fund the total cost.

There was a discussion regarding section 5 'overseas students.' MP commented that in the future this area could be reviewed in its entirety but it would not be a worthwhile exercise to complete on a small scale.

Fee rates remain the same apart from the proposed increase cost in social classes from £180 to £185.

**The committee accepted the Fees Policy and 2012/13 Fees as presented and recommended them to the full Corporation for approval.**

#### **6.6 Use of Caretakers House**

MP had only had access to the property from last week. He reported that there are no major renovations required in order to rent out the property. It only

requires decorating and some new carpets. The state agent has valued the property at £150k for sale or £550-600 monthly rental. MP is seeking two more valuations to compare. The initial proposal had been to rent out the property. One staff member had expressed an interest but on reflection thought the property was too small for them. MP proposed that the estate agent would advertise the property and find the tenant but that the college would manage the property in order to avoid the management fee from the agent.

JS, who has experience of housing matters, expressed concern that by renting out the property the college would have no control over who the tenants were which could potentially adversely affect the reputation of the college, and could pose safeguarding issues. Members discussed and agreed that a solicitor should be consulted on the contract.

Members also discussed the possibility of the college using the property for administrative or departmental purposes; or renting out to a commercial organisation as office space.

It was agreed that the house should not be sold as it is within the college grounds.

MP was asked to undertake further investigations following on from the discussion of the committee and to also consult a solicitor (preferably a local solicitor with knowledge of residential housing contracts.)

MP

*Post meeting note;*

*MP checked with an Estate Agent concerning the commercial rental option raised by Governors and was informed that the property would not meet the requirements of the market without major internal modifications i.e. removing structural walls, electrical and data cabling, a good broadband connection, extra fire prevention works/alarms and the provision of parking spaces. The cost of these works would be significant and they did not feel that the market potential would be good, so they recommended that we did not consider this option.*

## **6.7 Agreement with Winterhill School**

*Post meeting note – the Principal requested that discussions regarding this item should be deemed to be confidential. The detailed minute and supporting paper are available from the Clerk to the Corporation.*

## **6.8 Support Staff Pension Scheme Salary increase % assumption**

MP provided detail on this agenda item. Last year MP had reduced this figure to 2%, rather than the 4.8% suggested by the actuaries. The auditors thought a better figure would be between 2.5-3% based on a 20 year period. Members agreed to MP's proposal to increase to 3%.

## **7 Health & Safety Matters**

### **7.1 H&S Action Plan 2011/ 12 and UMAL Report**

MP stated that there were no updates at this time, but a new report would be available in the autumn term which.

## 8

### 8.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – annual review

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting commenting that in his absence Susanne Scotter had reviewed the policy.

JS suggested that a paragraph should be included to reflect the duty of care for staff in the instance when a student discloses an allegation of abuse as this can be a potentially very stressful situation. RW to draft an additional paragraph to be included within section 8.

JFB suggested a sentence be inserted into the introduction of the policy to highlight that there is a nominated governor for safeguarding.

RW

**The committee accepted the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as presented with the above amendments and recommended to the full Corporation for approval.**

### 8.2 Safeguarding and Child Protection 2011/12 – report

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting summarising key points. There had been particular emphasis on ‘e-safety’ this year. Members queried whether the serious incidents of safeguarding should be reported at the time to the Corporation. JS informed members that when situations arise he meets with Susanne Scotter and a mechanism is in place to identify very serious situations and on those occasions he would report to the Chair. The annual report is in place to ensure governors are aware of issues.

**The committee noted the paper as presented.**

### 8.3 SPH Grievance Procedure

RW referred to the paper tabled at the meeting explaining the minor amendments in Part B where there is a grievance against an SPH. Members agreed that this would be discussed further at the Corporation meeting once there had been time to review.

### 8.4 SPH Disciplinary Procedure

MP is in the process of updating the staff disciplinary procedure and liaising with the unions. It is thought that this potentially can be amended to apply to SPHs. If not, then the current SPH procedure will be reviewed in the autumn term.

### 8.5 Whistleblowing Policy

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting. It was agreed that it was not necessary to review this policy annually, instead it would be every 3 years.

JS suggested including a sentence regarding supporting whistle-blowers as this could cause stress on an individual.

LC was asked to look at other college’s Whistleblowing policies.

**The committee accepted the Whistleblowing Policy as presented with the above**

**amendment and recommended to the full Corporation for approval.**

**9 Resources Committee Annual Assessment**

LC asked for completion and return of the form.

**10 Any other business**

None

**11 Date of next meeting**

TBC (scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> October)

**12 Confidential Items**

*The detailed minutes and supporting paper are available from the Clerk to the Corporation.*

Signed.....*J F Bingham*.....

Date.....*4<sup>th</sup> October 2012*.....

**ACTIONS – Corporation Resources Committee Meeting – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July**

| Item | Action to be taken | By whom | By when |
|------|--------------------|---------|---------|
|      |                    |         |         |
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|      |                    |         |         |