



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
held on Monday 24 June 2019**

Present: - Mr Mervyn Jones (Chair)
Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Professor Robin Baker
Mrs Lynn Forrester-Walker (Co-opted Member)
Mr Scott Rolfe

In attendance: - Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)
Mr Tim Williams (Finance Director)

The meeting was quorate as there were five Members present.

1. Apologies for Absence
Ms Kay Sandford-Beal

2. Declaration of Interests
None declared

3.I Minutes of the Last Meeting
The Chair signed the minutes of the last meeting, including the confidential minutes and minutes without senior postholders' present, held on 25 March 2019 as true and accurate records.

3.II Matters arising from the Minutes
The Principal would clarify the reason for categorisation of the slip recorded in the cafe which was stated as 'not work-related'. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

4. Station Approach development
The Principal updated Governors that Herefordshire Council had agreed the trigger points in the nominations agreement which had been signed by all parties. BDO had provided a draft response confirming their judgement that the project would be counted off-balance sheet; a written report would follow. The final report from BDO was anticipated imminently. The Finance Director had notified Mazars (College's financial statements auditors) of BDO's response to ensure that this was acceptable.

The project manager is confident of completion of the project by 11 September 2020 which will provide accommodation for HE students but not foundation students based on term dates. City Heart have agreed to fund alternative temporary accommodation for foundation students before 11 September.

The project is currently one month behind schedule which had been due to commencing on 24 May 2019. In the event that the project is not completed by 11 September City Heart would be liable to fund alternative student accommodation providing there was evidence that the delay was City Heart's

fault. Contingency throughout the building project was raised noting that Herefordshire Council have a project management group with representation from HCA.

The Committee agreed

- To acknowledge appreciation to the Principal and Finance Director for securing the Station Approach project for operation by 11 September 2020
- To consider appointing a part time Project Manager
ACTION PRINCIPAL/FINANCE DIRECTOR

5. Finance Report [A confidential minute was recorded]

6. Marketing - activity and impact

The Head of Communications took up post in February 2019 focusing on developing a course specific approach to marketing alongside institutional awareness-raising. A range of new initiatives are being introduced to improve the College's digital performance and evaluation.

Search engine optimisation (SEO) has been introduced to increase advertising for HCA. Analytics will be used to adjust target marketing based on effectiveness. A creative map is being introduced to systematically collate data. This is a reallocation of spend and not an increase.

A PR specialist will cover maternity leave who has been working on the College's national strategy for advertising and delivering social media training for the marketing team and Course Leaders.

Print advertising has been researched to ascertain its effectiveness. A campaign is being launched for mature students and a targeted door drop to specific areas. A revised short course programme will be launched in spring 2020, development costs and risks are minimal with a small income contribution. A Governor asked if other opportunities to grow income have been investigated such as an international strategy and delivery of master classes. These could be explored in the future.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the marketing presentation

7. College budget 2019/20 and financial forecasts (draft) [A confidential minute was recorded]

8. Value for Money Outline Plan

The Chair explained that there will be discussion on value for money (VFM) at the October Board meeting. This would include the College's offer to students and costs compared to productivity. It would be embedded in external communication with students showing the value of HE courses.

VFM is difficult to define and will need to be articulated and explained clearly to potential applicants and students. This could be shown using a pie chart incorporating the level of subsidy to students in workshops, frequency of one to one tutorials and staff/student ratios.

There was further discussion concluding that course offers need to be sustainable. It was acknowledged that some courses are high cost delivery e.g. Artist Blacksmithing. The individual viability of courses, option of some shared modules and reasons offered needed to be identified and discussed with Course Leaders. A Governor asked about costs of FE delivery compared to HE;

overall there are more support levels for FE with lower income received per student.

The Committee agreed: -

- A briefing on VFM would be prepared for the October Board meeting for discussion including communicating the offer to students, costs and productivity

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

9. Key Strategic Milestones and Deliverables 2019/20 (draft)

The report outlined key milestones to implement the strategy in 2019/20 focusing on recruitment. This covered curriculum development, marketing and communications, creative spaces and places and operations.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report on key strategic milestones and deliverables

10. Health and Safety Report

- I. Health and Safety Report was discussed with questions duly answered. This included the introduction of mandatory online staff training for staff to complete basic health and safety training.

The Principal has taken the lead on health and safety which has been restructured following the resignation of the long serving Estates Manager. A Health and Safety and Estates Manager will be appointed internally who will study relevant health and safety qualifications. External consultancy will be used to ensure robust health and safety is maintained. Free support might be available from the insurers. Governors agreed that the Board has responsibility for welfare and health and safety suggesting commissioning a 2-day audit of systems and processes once the staff member is qualified. This would be useful to identify any issues and prepare an action plan. Capital expenditure and equipment budgets will be managed by the Head of HE and Head of FE some input from the Finance Director.

A summary of incident reported and progress against the operational safety plan was provided.

- II. The Health and Safety Policy Statement was presented evidencing the Board's commitment to the establishment of a healthy and safe workplace for staff, students and visitors. This stated that the Chair of the Board of Governors is responsible for seeing that the policy is implemented.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report
- To recommend the Board endorse the Chair and Principal to sign the Health and Safety Policy Statement

11. Annual items for Committee

The Committee agreed: -

- To appoint Mervyn Jones as Chair of the Committee for 2019/20 until additional members are recruited onto the Committee
- The Committee self assessed its performance concluding that it was effective and adequately met the requirements of its terms of reference
- The Clerk would review the terms of reference during the summer

12. Any Other Business

No items.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

An additional meeting was arranged on Monday 8 July 2019 at 5.00 pm to agree a budget to recommend to the Board for approval. The next meeting was arranged for Monday 25 November 2019 commencing at 5.00 pm.

Signed as a true record

Chair **Date**