

# LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## **MINUTES** of the meeting of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held on **10 MARCH 2014** at 5.00pm at the College, Horninglow Road, Sheffield

Present: Kevin Clifford (Chair)  
Jonathan Hall  
Peter Leppard

In attendance: Dominic Harrex (Associate Principal (Resources))  
Faith Tankard (College Accountant)  
Sharon West (Clerk to the Corporation)

Apologies for absence were received from Omer Abdulqader, Faheem Arshad and the Principal.

**Action by**  
**Who      When**

### **1      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2      MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2013 AND 10 FEBRUARY 2014**

Members noted that there was a typographical error in paragraph 2 of item 8 in the Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> December meeting.

The Minutes of the meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013, as amended, and 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

See Confidential Minutes.

### **3      FINANCIAL PLANNING 2014-15**

The Clerk circulated copies of the information pack that had been given to staff on 7<sup>th</sup> March. The Associate Principal (Resources) advised the Committee that a number of initial enquiries about the voluntary severance scheme had already been received.

The Associate Principal (Resources) reported that he had enquired about the costs involved of early repayment of the College's bank loan. In addition to the settlement figure there would be a penalty cost of £38,000 which would impact on the Income and Expenditure Account. He believed that it would be in the College's interest to repay the loan within the next year, but asked the Committee to defer the decision until later in the year. Repayment would generate a saving of £32,000 in

interest per annum. Members asked at what point the penalty cost would disappear. The Associate Principal (Resources) confirmed that this would be in final year of the loan period. Members acknowledged that repayment of the loan at the beginning of the new financial year would, in the worst case, only incur an additional £6,000 of cost and agreed that if the College could afford to so it would look at making the repayment in the current year.

The Associate Principal (Resources) talked the Committee through the breakdown of planned teaching hours. He explained that the voluntary severance scheme had been opened to all staff on the advice of the College's legal advisors. Rather than ring-fencing the scheme they had advised that it was preferable to invite applications, but make it clear that applications might be rejected. The scheme would be open for three weeks and it was intended that informal notification could be given to applicants prior to the Easter break. Approval of Senior Leadership Team recommendations would then be sought from Governors. At that stage it would be possible to assess whether there would be a need to look at any compulsory redundancies.

The Associate Principal (Resources) believed that the resulting staffing levels would be sustainable for the foreseeable future, unless further cutbacks in funding were made. Members noted that there was currently coverage about whether the Government could maintain its ring-fencing of health and education spending.

Members were informed that the Skills Funding Agency funding allocation notice was expected within the next few weeks. They noted that the financial plans included £80,000 of capital for the maintenance of the building, fixtures and fittings.

Members queried the use of overtime. The Associate Principal (Resources) that the College had a limited use of overtime with actual spend in the last year of less than £10,000.

Members discussed the potential for redeployment. The Associate Principal (Resources) confirmed that there would be redeployment opportunities in line with maintaining and improving standards.

The Associated Principal (Resources) reminded Members that an additional meeting was being set up for 14<sup>th</sup> April. He would bring a general update on the general budget picture to that meeting.

Members agreed that the Corporation should be asked to sign-off the details of the voluntary severance scheme and proposed changes to tutorial arrangements and to delegate

authority to the Committee to consider and approve recommendations relating to individual voluntary redundancy applications.

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#### **4 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Associate Principal (Resources) presented the Management Accounts for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. The College Accountant circulated copies of the updated Balance Sheet, which had been amended to accurately reflect cash at bank and monies on deposit.

The Associate Principal (Resources) informed the Committee that there continued to be some problems with the finance system and the profiling of budgets throughout the year. However, he confirmed that expenditure was in line with that of the previous year.

The Associate Principal (Resources) summarised the favourable and adverse variances relating to income and expenditure. Members noted that the catering subsidy would be a pressure for the remainder of the year. Expenditure had been increased on marketing. The findings of, and recommendations arising from, the market research would be presented to the Corporation meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. There had been higher than planned expenditure on consultants but this was an investment that had been required in order to improve quality. Licensing costs for information technology would be reviewed in depth. There were a limited number of one-off pay variances which would reduce as a proportion over the course of the year.

Members acknowledged that income and expenditure would be very tight. They were advised that the need for prudence would be emphasised to budget holders.

The Associate Principal (Resources) explained that the current ratio did not reflect the accessibility of funds. There was also some further work needed on the cash flow statement to reflect the cash at bank.

The Committee noted the Management Accounts.

#### **5 RISK REGISTERS**

The Associate Principal (Resources) reported that the Audit Committee had received the full set of risk registers and explained that the operational risk registers were also being presented to each of the relevant committees. The assurance of controls column had still to be completed and he outlined the three different levels of assurance.

Members were informed that the Internal Audit Service had reviewed the risk management arrangements and would be reporting their findings to the Audit Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

Members asked for an explanation of the scoring system. The Associate Principal (Resources) explained that a 5x5 grid numbered 1-25 had been adopted as it allowed for greater definition on chance, impact and residual risk. He would be providing further information on risk management to the Corporation and was seeking to ensure that an holistic approach was adopted across the College.

Members asked how consistency was ensured across each area of risk. The Associate Principal (Resources) explained that the registers were moderated by the Senior Leadership team. There had been some initial inconsistencies but he believed that these had been addressed and risk management would improve year on year as staff became more familiar with the system.

The Committee noted the risk registers for Estates and Operations, Finance, Human Resources, and Network Management.

## **6 SINGLE EQUALITY DUTY UPDATE**

The Associate Principal (Resources) apologised that the update was not available as the Vice-Principal (Student Engagement) was away on a Local Authority Group project in Barcelona. The Chair requested that the update be presented to the additional meeting being held on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

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Members noted that the College was working towards the next phase of Investors In Diversity recognition.

## **7 HEALTH & SAFETY – EMERGING ISSUES**

The Associate Principal (Resources) presented the report from the Estates and Operations Manager.

See Confidential Minutes.

The Committee noted the report on emerging Health & Safety issues.

## **8 SICKNESS ABSENCE FIGURES**

The Associate Principal (Resources) circulated information from the Human Resources Manager on sickness absence figures as requested by the Committee at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September.

Members noted that the number of long term absences had reduced but the number of short term absences had increased which created some difficulties in ensuring that cover was provided.

The Associate Principal (Resources) reported on a number of new initiatives that had been or were being introduced to improve staff welfare. These included relaxation and keep fit sessions.

## **9 POLICY REVIEWS**

The Committee considered the following policy documents:

Data Protection policy  
ICT Systems Acceptable Use Policy  
ICT Systems Security Policy  
Hot Work Permit System Policy  
Whistleblowing Policy

The Associate Principal (Resources) highlighted that there were minor changes proposed to the Data Protection Policy, ICT Systems Acceptable Use Policy and Hot Work Permit System Policy to reflect changes to role and team titles.

The ICT Systems Security Policy contained a more detailed section on encryption. Members discussed the arrangements for data sharing with the funding agencies and the City Council. They noted that these were secure and were externally audited. Members noted that the College discouraged staff from taking information off site. They suggested that consideration be given to the use of encrypted memory keys. They also recommended looking at Network Gateways for staff accessing College email via smartphones and other mobile devices.

Members noted that students were provided with a simplified version of the ICT Systems Security Policy and that it formed the basis of a tutorial session.

The Associate Principal (Resources) explained that following changes in legislation which aimed to increase protection for 'genuine' whistleblowers, as well as addressing a loophole that protected workers who effectively complained about personal grievances, rather than matters in the public interest, the Clerk was recommending that the College should replace its existing Public Interest Disclosure Policy and procedure and adopt the model Whistleblowing Policy produced by the Association of Colleges.

The Committee approved the revised policy documents.

**10 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Additional meeting to be held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014. Peter Leppard and the Clerk recorded their apologies.

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014 at 5.00pm.

The meeting ended at 6.25pm.

Signed: ..... (Chair)

Date: .....