

# LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

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

Present: Kevin Clifford (Chair)  
Omer Abdulqader  
Faheem Arshad  
Alan Law  
Peter Leppard  
Mo Nisbet (Principal)

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

No apologies for absence had been received.

**Action by  
Who      When**

### **1      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2      CONTRACT REDUCTIONS AND VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE**

The Associate Principal (Resources) outlined the requests for contract reduction which had been received from all staff and the voluntary severance requests received from Managers. He advised the Committee that the majority of requests could be accommodated without any adverse effect on quality or service delivery. The Committee considered the individual requests.

See Confidential Minutes.

The Associate Principal (Resources) confirmed that the Committee's decisions would be communicated to staff in general once they had been confirmed with the individuals concerned.

### **3      2014-15 PLANNING**

The Associate Principal (Resources) set out the approach proposed by the Senior Leadership Team to achieve the level of savings that the College needed to make as a result of the reduction in funding for 2014-15. He sought the views of the Committee on the proposals.

The Associate Principal (Resources) outlined the rationale for the restructuring of curriculum areas. Members asked whether there would be additional training costs involved as Curriculum Leaders took on new areas. The Associate Principal (Resources) confirmed that a plan would be put in place to

ensure that Curriculum Leaders had access to external training so that they could develop the necessary skills and subject expertise. The staff concerned already had a lot of transferrable skills and shared experience. The Curriculum Leaders would be involved in meetings with staff in the curriculum areas to inform them of the proposed changes.

The Associate Principal (Resources) talked Members through the proposed changes to tutorial arrangements. The Committee acknowledged that the management of tutorials was not a new question for the Leadership Team and that, whilst recognising the improvements that had been made, it was keen to build upon them. Members asked what the minimum qualification level would be for potential Academic Tutors. The Associate Principal (Resources) explained that the College would be looking to appoint staff with student support qualifications or those who were studying to become teachers. He added that the College had good experience in recruiting to similar roles. The individuals appointed would need to be able to engage students and support them.

The Committee accepted that calculating the teaching staff reductions required in relation to the new curriculum areas would not be straightforward. It was proposed that a voluntary severance scheme based upon the same terms used in 2012-13 should be offered to try and achieve the savings required and if at all possible to avoid the need for any compulsory redundancies. The Associate Principal (Resources) was meeting with the College's employment law advisors the following day to look at the proposed voluntary and compulsory contractual changes. Members recognised that this was a complicated technical process.

Members asked if objections from the trade unions were anticipated. The Principal confirmed that objections were anticipated on two counts. Firstly in relation to the move to using non-teaching to deliver tutorials and secondly to the reduction in staff posts.

Members were saddened that the Committee was having to have these conversations, but accepted that the College found itself in this position as a result of financial reality. Members understood and accepted the direction of travel being put forward by the Senior Leadership Team as a result.

The Associate Principal (Resources) explained that reductions in Cross-College staffing to achieve the remainder of the savings required would need to be considered once the teaching staff calculation had been completed. The changes to date had been mainly voluntary and the Senior Leadership Team would seek to avoid revisiting teams, where possible, that had already experienced reductions.

The Associate Principal (Resources) set out the recommendations the Committee was being asked to consider.

The Committee **approved** the re-organised curriculum areas as a result of the reduction in the number of Curriculum Leader posts.

The Committee had no objection to moving to an attribute based system and **approved** the plan to move tutorial delivery from teaching to Cross-College staff.

The Committee **reluctantly approved** the approach to reducing teaching staff costs, but stressed the importance of maintaining the skills base and quality.

The Committee **approved** the approach to reducing Cross-College staff costs. Members agreed that consideration would need to be given by the Senior Leadership Team to how to manage changes to the current way of working.

Members asked whether consideration had been given to selling services to other organisations. The Associate Principal (Resources) explained that he was currently working with two Cross-College Managers in relation to selling consultancy services for Health & Safety and Safeguarding. Members felt that this was a good approach which would enable/assist longevity. They agreed that it would also be worthwhile investigating the possibility of shared posts with similar sized or smaller organisations, such as schools.

The Associate Principal (Resources) informed the Committee that there were still significant savings to be made in non-pay budgets aside from the recurring savings resulting from changes made in 2012-13. He would keep Governors advised on progress with reducing budgets and would be working with budget holders to assist them in managing a reduced budget.

The Associate Principal (Resources) set out the proposed adjustment to the College target for surplus for 2014-15 if more time was needed to achieve cost reductions. Members accepted that the College would achieve a technical surplus because of the treatment of depreciation in the funding bodies' financial health assessment calculations. The Committee agreed that the College should work to a balanced budget as it was essential that it lived within its means.

The Committee discussed the possibility of repaying the remainder of the College's loan with the Co-operative Bank. Members realised that repaying the loan would reduce the College's reserves, but would effectively cover the cost of one teaching post over seven years. It would also make the College more secure in the eyes of the funding bodies. The Committee

asked the Associate Principal (Resources) to bring a settlement figure to the next meeting.

**DH Mar '14**

The Committee emphasised the importance of ensuring that the College's sickness absence management processes were robust as this had an impact on reducing costs. The Associate Principal (Resources) assured the Committee that sickness absence was well managed by the Human Resources team. Members agreed that the College needed to be a caring but practical employer.

The Associate Principal (Resources) explained the plan to appoint new staff on temporary contracts. Members questioned whether this might affect the College's ability to recruit. The Associate Principal (Resources) accepted that this was an issue for some posts, but not necessarily for others. The Committee agreed that the type of contract offered should be considered on a post by post basis as appropriate.

The Committee discussed variations in redundancy payments and the movement of staff within the public sector. Members noted that the College's redundancy payments were limited to compulsory redundancy rates.

#### **4 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 5.00pm.

The meeting ended at 6.35pm.

Signed: ..... (Chair)

Date: .....