

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
held remotely on Monday 6 July 2020**

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

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

The meeting was held remotely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was quorate as there were seven Members present.

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

2. Declaration of Interests

Mervyn Jones declared an interest regarding appointment of the Chair of the Committee.

3.I Minutes of the Last Meeting

Governors agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes of the last meeting, including the confidential minutes, held on 11 May 2020 as a true record.

3.II Matters arising from the Minutes

The Principal confirmed that there are risk assessments for re-opening the campuses following the lockdown which were presented to the Board in June.

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

4. Management accounts to 31 May 2020

There were no significant variances to report. The Finance Director drew Governors' attention to the capital expenditure schedule explaining that about 50% of capital expenditure had not been spent with the budget reduced to £61K; this would increase cash this year. The cash balance forecasted to July 2020 is c£2.1M.

A Governor concurred that the reduction in capital spend will improve the cash flow and P&L account asking if there were any risks if capital investment is not fulfilled. There are minimal risks to a reduction this year with significant spend allocated to replace a boiler and telephone system next year.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the management accounts to 31 May 2020

5. **Finance return to ESFA 2020/21 and cash flow [A CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE WAS RECORDED]**

6. **Project2020 [A CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE WAS RECORDED]**

7. **Staff Pay Award**

In view of the financial situation exasperated by COVID-19 it was proposed that no pay award is made this year. A pay award had not been included in the budget for next year. The Remuneration Committee had concurred with this decision in a previous meeting and would not be recommending pay awards for senior postholders.

The Committee agreed: -

- To recommend no pay award this year in view of the College's financial position and restructuring

8. **Key updates**

The Principal provided the following verbal key updates.

- I. Management are addressing issues and planning in response to COVID-19. The Incident Management Group continues to meet weekly. Lockdown has been lifted with a large proportion of students returning to campus following guidelines, including social distancing. Planning has commenced to deliver teaching and learning on campus with access to studios which is part of the College's distinctive offer. OfS requires institutions to publish their offer by the end of July incorporating the implications of COVID-19. The College is discussing options to lease the hive building on CRC from Herefordshire Council on a cost recovery basis to ensure social distancing and flexible use of the campus. A Governor enquired about options for students who are shielding or do not feel able to attend campus. The College will work with students who are shielding and provide digital teaching and learning. The quality of digital delivery is being improved as part of planning for any future potential lockdown. Overall students have indicated that they are keen to return to campus.
- II. Engie (construction contractors) have returned to site following the lockdown. Engie has confirmed that the build to complete student accommodation for September cannot be accelerated with completion delayed to December. The College has worked with CityHeart and Herefordshire Council to secure Gardner Hall accommodation (owned by Herefordshire Council) with a 50% reduction on the first term accommodation costs, and Miller Court in the city; which will be managed by CityHeart from September 2020. The nominations agreement requires CityHeart to pay costs to move students to alternative accommodation. The Principal has a positive working relationship with CityHeart and commended support from

Herefordshire Council.

- III. The College postponed regular Health and Safety Committee meetings with no incidents recorded during lockdown. The Principal reiterated that a COVID-19 risk assessment is now in place which is being managed under the auspices of the Incident Management Group. The health and safety annual statement was provided for the Committee's consideration to recommend to the Board for endorsement.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note key verbal updates from the Principal
- To recommend the Board endorse the Chair and Principal to sign the Health and Safety Policy Statement

9. Annual items for Committee

The Committee agreed: -

- To appoint Mervyn Jones as Chair of Committee for 2020/21
- The Committee self assessed its performance concluding that it was effective and adequately met the requirements of its terms of reference
- No changes were proposed to the terms of reference

10. Any other business

The Committee thanked Lynn Forrester-Walker for her contribution to the Committee, and previously the Board, who had been a fundamental source of knowledge and wisdom. The Chair thanked her personally, and on behalf of the Committee, Board and management team. Everyone reiterated their gratitude to Lynn Forrester-Walker.

11. Date and time of next meeting

Monday 23 November 2020 commencing at 5.00 pm.