

Riverside College

Widnes & Runcorn

MINUTES OF FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2019

Present:	Tony McDermott Wesley Rourke Bob Towers	External Governor (Chair) External Governor Co-opted Committee Member
In Attendance:	Ben Barton Julie Holland Gordon Holmes Lesley Venables Julia Withersby	Deputy Head of Cronton Campus (Observer) Deputy Principal (Finance & Resources) Head of Finance & Estates – minutes 60 to 81 Clerk to the Governors Head of Human Resources – minutes 60 to 67

APOLOGIES

60 Apologies for absence were received from Susan Smith (External Governor) and Mary Murphy (Principal).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

61 Declarations of interest were received from Wesley Rourke in respect of minute 78 and from Tony McDermott in respect of minutes 89 and 90.

MINUTES

62 **Resolved -** That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

MATTERS ARISING

63 Governors received a report on progress against the actions identified at the previous meeting. It was noted that all of these were either being implemented, had been completed or were featured on the agenda.

64 It was agreed that a short tour of the Cronton Campus would be arranged for governors on 18th March (immediately prior to the Board meeting) to enable them to visualise the improvements proposed in the papers presented later on this agenda.

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

65 The Head of Human Resources presented the termly HR update, which covered sickness absence, staff turnover and utilisation of teaching staff.

66 Information on the College's submission under the Gender Pay Gap Reporting was received by the Committee and would be uploaded by the deadline of the end of March 2019. The analysis indicated that the mean gender pay gap had reduced by 0.32% and the median pay gap had decreased by 0.54%. Benchmarking data from other local colleges would be included in the HR report to the June meeting.

67 The report confirmed that there was a mainly female workforce, with significant numbers of female staff in Study Support, Administration and Estates. Female staff were under-represented within management and academic roles compared to the proportion of female staff overall (64%). The percentage of female teaching staff had increased by 1.35% over the past year.

Julia Withersby left the meeting at this point.

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

68 The Committee received the Health & Safety Report for the year to date.

69 It was noted that the total number of minor injuries had reduced compared to the same period in 2017/2018 and against a background of significant growth in learner numbers. There were no discernible trends in the accident figures, either by department or campus.

70 All accidents were investigated to determine whether any changes were necessary to the College's processes and procedures. Management felt that the relatively low number of accidents was attributable to improved awareness of safety issues and the high level of staff training undertaken. Following a request at the last Committee meeting, the Deputy Principal advised that there had been one minor accident amongst the external catering staff and none from the contractors working on the construction of the Cronton Playhouse.

71 The total number of 'near misses' had also fallen in comparison to the same period in 2017/2018. There had been no RIDDOR reportable incidents in the current term.

72 A number of training and awareness-raising events had taken place already in 2018/2019 and further activities were planned for the remainder of the academic year, including a building fabric survey and first aid training for staff and students.

PROPERTY UPDATE

73 The Deputy Principal provided a presentation on the College's Property Strategy since 2012 and proposals for future developments.

74 Governors were reminded that the Board had agreed to £1m per year being spent on planned maintenance and refurbishments, which would increase the total amount of space classified as good or better at the Kingsway Campus in line with sector norms.

75 However, there were still some areas of the Campus that required updating. Additionally, following significant growth in the number of apprentices within some curriculum areas, management proposed the establishment of a multi-skills workshop.

76 At the Cronton Campus there had been a significant capital investment since 2012, with 69% of accommodation now graded as 'good or better' against the ESFA's criteria.

77 The Committee received detailed proposals for further development of the facilities.

78 Governors were reminded that the College also leased the CrmZ premises on Kingsway from Halton Borough Council. An investment had been made to improve the facilities provided for Foundation Studies learners.

79 Financial analysis indicated that the developments outlined above were affordable and could be achieved without any loan funding. However, initial discussions with the College's bank on potential loans had been positive, which would enable this money to be utilised for other purposes.

80 Illustrations of the future projects would be provided to the Board's March meeting and it was agreed that a full Property Strategy would be presented for approval at the July Board meeting.

81 **Resolved -** That the Board **be RECOMMENDED** to approve the Summer Works Programme.

Gordon Holmes left the meeting at this point.

MID-YEAR REVIEW 2018/2019

82 The Deputy Principal presented the Mid-Year Review for 2018/2019.

83 Governors were advised that the balance sheet was healthy and that the College's reserves were higher than planned. All ratios against which colleges had been measured during the Area Based Review process had been met or exceeded.

84 The College had been graded as having 'outstanding' financial health by the ESFA.

85 **Resolved -** That the content of the Mid-Year Review be noted and submitted to the full Board for information

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

86 The Deputy Principal (Finance & Resources) presented the management accounts to 31st January 2019.

87 The Deputy Principal advised that the College's financial health rating remained at 'outstanding' for 2018/2019 and this had been formally confirmed by the ESFA. Compared to the targets in the finance dashboard, the College was performing at a slightly higher level than planned against all key indicators.

88 **Resolved -** That the management accounts to 31st January 2019 be accepted

PARTNERSHIP PROVISION

89 Governors received a report on performance against partnership provision contracts in 2018/2019, together with proposals for a small number of amendments.

- 90 **Resolved -**
- 1 That progress and current activity levels in 2018/2019 be noted.
 - 2 That the Board **be RECOMMENDED** to approve the increase in partnership provision contracts for Widnes Vikings and Progress Sport for 2018/2019.

POLICIES

91 The Committee received a proposed Fees Policy for 2019/2020 included an inflationary increase in charges, but otherwise remained broadly similar to 2018/2019. The Policy now incorporated the impact of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget to the Liverpool City Regional Combined Authority.

- 92 **Resolved -** That the Board **be RECOMMENDED** to approve the Fees Policy for 2019/2020, subject to some minor amendments

ITEMS TO BE REPORTED TO THE BOARD

93 The Chair summarised the outcomes of the meeting that would be reported to the Board at its March 2019 meeting:

- Statistics received on HR issues (sickness absence, staff turnover, retention, Gender Pay Gap)
- Continued low level of reported accident statistics for 2018/2019
- Mid-Year Review indicated a level of performance that exceeded initial financial projections
- Management accounts for January 2019 were scrutinised and accepted
- Detailed monitoring of progress on property issues and proposals for 2019/2020
- Revised policies on Fees for 2019/2020 was recommended for approval by the Board
- Proposals for amendments to partnership provision contracts for 2018/2019 were recommended for approval

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

27th June 2018, 5.00 p.m.