

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2017

1. **PRESENT**

Mr P Copley, Mr M Gallagher, Ms J Maher, Mr S McCracken, Mr G Tawton and Mr N Worth

Also in attendance: Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mrs D Holland (College Accountant) and Mrs J Webb (Minute Taker)

Meeting attendance: 100%

2. **TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR 2017-18**

Having been duly nominated and seconded Steve McCracken was appointed as Chair of the Committee for 2017-18.

Steve McCracken in the Chair

3. **TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIR FOR 2017-18**

Having been duly nominated and seconded Gerry Tawton was appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee for 2017-18.

4. **ACTION LOG**

The Action Log was reviewed by Members.

It was agreed that the first ten items can be removed from the Action Log as they have now been dealt with.

The item relating to the briefing of the newly appointed Principal of the need to consider strategic utilisation of RLQ had been actioned. Jo Maher commented that the premises currently were of mixed use with varying rental rates and future use was being explored and discussed at senior management level. Further notes pertaining to RLQ were recorded in section five below. ●

5. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JUNE 2017**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 June 2017 were approved.

Members had previously decided to rotate the agenda for the inclusion of alternate Estates and HR matters and confirmation was given that Karen Whitton should be invited to attend when HR matters are on the agenda. ●

Gerry Tawton enquired what the SAB final budget situation for 2016/17 was and Janet Hemmant replied that approximately £307K would need to be returned the ESFA; some of this related to partnership work that was not delivered and therefore had an associated cost saving.

Jo Maher informed Members of her thoughts regarding Red Lion Quarter that the space could probably be used more effectively if the College's offer and portfolio included increased HE provision. Red Lion Quarter needs to be economically viable, which currently is not the case. She said that a strategic review of the facility is to be conducted. Jo Maher said that both she and Fiona Grady would be visiting Bishop Grosseteste University shortly with the aim of developing some collaborative work. The delay in confirming a new tenant for the former restaurant area was discussed. This should hopefully be resolved in the near future.

Jo Maher said that the College now has a dedicated HE Manager who understands projects well and is dedicated in expanding the College's provision in this area. She also said that she has considerable experience herself in this field but would need to know the local market better. Steve McCracken thought that it would be useful to have a report on what the proposed scenario would look like and Jo reassured him that this would be done once meetings with BGU had taken place and the issue had been explored further.

6. **FINANCE**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant circulated information relating to the draft Income and Expenditure section of the accounts for information and discussion and also informed Members that the Auditors would be in College the week commencing 9 October.

Members discussed the content therein and it was noted that the College had made a surplus in the past year which was pleasing. In response to a question from Steve McCracken Debbie Holland confirmed that the balance sheet would be constructed next week. Janet Hemmant was asked to circulate a copy of the final budget plan for 2017-18 to Members.

A discussion took place regarding enrolment numbers and demographics particularly in relation to a local change in 16+ provision. Members were advised that learner numbers will continue to fluctuate within the first six weeks of the academic year as some learners may change courses or indeed decide that College is not their chosen academic pathway. A more in-depth analysis of figures can be sought but this would incur some costs. Jo Maher said that she had given details of the Baker Clause to Marketing.

Janet Hemmant drew Members' attention to the AoC Briefing on pensions which was included in the pack of papers. It was noted that the next briefing by the local government pension scheme actuary was likely to be in February 2018.

7. **PROPERTY**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant informed Members that a number of estates issues had been dealt with over the summer break including expansion of the Small Animal Care facility and staff office moves. Completion of the land transfer with Boston Borough Council has now taken place. With regards to the bid submitted for the proposed EMAT centre it is understood the LEP decision may now be delayed. Jo Maher said that she was attending a Principals' forum organised by the Employment Skills Board next week when details of how and when the LEP will conclude the scoring process will be clearer.

Janet Hemmant gave an update on the Skegness premises and said there had been some interest in renting a section of the premises but nothing had yet been firmed up.

8. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Members noted the Committee's performance against its 2016-17 targets.

Steve McCracken informed Members that he had met with Janet Hemmant last week when they discussed possible targets for consideration for this academic year. Janet Hemmant gave the details which were discussed and it was agreed that the proposed Finance and Resources Committee targets for 2017-18 be:

- 80% attendance
- Progress the following objectives:
 - Creation of an EMAT Centre
 - Expansion of Construction facilities
 - Create a strategy for use of the Red Lion Quarter
 - Resolution of the Skegness lease
 - Gain more understanding about apprenticeship funding
- Repeat the in-depth review of the College budget which would also act as a CPD session for new Corporation members
- Monitor the College's cash flow position

9. **STAFF PAY**

A discussion was initiated about staff pay and management of expectations. Jo Maher identified a number of issues and challenges which the sector is facing and how good and accurate communication to staff is vital as staff need to appreciate that colleges are in a very challenging market generally in the current economic climate. There is a need for mindfulness in future planning to test its affordability. ●

Peter Copley asked if there were any staff benefits which would help.

10. **HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT**

Steve McCracken enquired as to an update on the findings of the four day audit which was carried out in June. Janet Hemmant informed the Committee that the official written report had not yet been received. Janet Hemmant was asked to investigate the delay and chase up the report and to then circulate to Members as a matter of urgency. ●

11. **INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Jo Maher informed Members that the college had information relating to the tendering process. Should a decision be made to further this issue then full details would need to be provided to the Board for consideration. She said she would continue to monitor and brief Members as and when is necessary. ●

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee will be on 20 November 2017.