



MINUTES

**of the meeting of the Finance and Employment Committee
held on Wednesday 2 December 2015**

Present: - Dr Alan Lavers (Chair)
Mr James Caird
Mr Tony Ford
Mr Richard Garnett
Mr Ian Peake (Principal)

In Attendance: - Mr David Williams (Deputy Principal)
Mr Edward Rehm (Director of Finance)
Mrs Debra Baldwin (Director of Personnel)
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Corporation)

The meeting was quorate as five Members were present.

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| 1. Apologies for Absence | |
| 2. Declaration of Interests
No interests declared. | |
| 3. I. Minutes of the Last Meeting
The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2015 as a true and accurate record. | |
| II. Matters Arising from the Minutes
No matters arising. | |
| 4. Annual Employment Reports 2014/15
The Director of Personnel presented the following reports: - | |
| I. Health and Safety Report | |
| A. Members were pleased to note there was only one RIDDOR incident during the year. There were a total of 143 recorded accidents, which matched the last two years. However, it was noted that student numbers had reduced over the years which made it difficult to compare. A breakdown showing accidents by category, faculty, area and population was presented. | |
| There was discussion about the high number of accidents in Animal Studies which had been discussed previously. These were mainly bites and scratches from small animals. The Health and Safety Advisor was working with Animal Studies to implement prevention measures, such as improving the labelling cages according to potential risk level of animals biting | |

or to only be handled with supervision. There were nine accidents in Equine Studies which were predominantly falling off horses.

- B. Health and safety walks were conducted by CMT which had been very positive and demonstrated commitment to health and safety.
- C. Risk assessment forms have been added to Moodle so that they are readily accessible to staff. The Red File will also be available to access on the intranet.
- D. Lone working arrangements have been put in place for staff working at Ludlow College as during the holiday period there are often limited staff in College.
- E. Targets for 2015/16 were outlined in the report.
- F. Members recorded their appreciation to the Health and Safety Advisor for preparing a comprehensive report. It was agreed to invite her to present her report at a future meeting.

D Baldwin/
L Watkins

II. Staff Report

- A. The College employed 446 staff as at 31 July 2015, equating to 223 FTEs. This had reduced by 51 people from the previous year following restructuring.
- B. Information presented on staff turnover, groups and profiles included breakdowns by age range, gender, ethnicity, length of service and staff with disabilities. Staff turnover is calculated using the highest number of staff from the beginning of the year showing movement within the year.
- C. A Member commented on the length of staff service showing a high proportion of staff had left within two years of their employment. This was because hourly paid staff can have short term contracts or move roles on a more regular basis than substantive members of staff. It was confirmed that staff who had left within admin and central services had worked in different areas of the College.
- D. Ethnicity was reflective of the two counties when compared with data published by the Local Authorities last year. It was noted that UCU had requested details of ethnicity under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Seven staff had chosen to declare a disability.
- E. The absence rate had increased to 3.72% compared to 3.48%. Personnel were preparing a breakdown of reasons and patterns.

III. Staff Development Report

- A. Allocation of £44,610 staff development budget was noted which provided training for 1,515 individuals covering 8772 hours.
- B. Training and development had been focused on meeting individual and collective training and needs whilst ensuring value for money.

IV. List of Personnel Policies

These were presented to evidence the College's

comprehensive employment framework.

V. Conduct at Work Policy

This provided clear guidance for staff on expected conduct and behaviour.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the annual reports presented by the Director of Personnel.
- To note personnel policies evidencing a comprehensive employment framework
- To approve the conduct at work policy

5. Members' report and financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2015

I. Herefordshire and Ludlow College

The Director of Finance had prepared a draft summary of key points for the Committee: -

- A. The College made a surplus of £293,000. This was an excellent achievement when nearly half of colleges are expected to have a year-end deficit.
- B. The Audit Committee had received the management letter for HLC and recommended it to the Board for approval.
- C. A comparison of financial performance showed good financial performance over the previous ten years.
- D. Financial objectives set by the Board had been exceeded.

II. Keith St Peters Ltd

- A. KSP Ltd made a surplus of £1,837 following a gift aid to the College of £37,000.
- B. Comparative performance noted since the College acquired the company in 2010. The turnover had decreased; however, it still remained viable.
- C. Financial objectives remained positive.

A Member asked why there were not separate accounts for Pound Farm noting that this was a separate cost centre but not a separate legal entity. Pound Farm uses separate software with a part time administrator employed to manage this and share with agriculture students as part of their course. Pound Farm makes an annual surplus with details reported in the College's monthly management accounts. There was discussion about reporting this specifically to the Committee concluding that, although it was additional work to prepare with a summary already provided in the monthly management accounts, a one off report would be provided for the Committee which would also include contribution to overheads.

E Rehm

The Committee agreed: -

- To recommend the Board instruct the Principal and Chair to sign the Members' Report and Financial Statements to 31 July 2015

6. Finance Reports

I. Management Accounts to 31 October 2015 (Discussed

at November Board meeting). The Director of Finance referred Members to the cost centre which included Pound Farm. These were direct costs only and did not include overheads.

II. Capital Projects Update

The LEP had approved a capital bid for equipment to fit out the new workshop at Holme Lacy Campus. This was 2:1 (College:LEP) matched funding which would include a training tractor with GPS mapping. The farm qualified for this funding because it is a teaching farm as opposed to a commercial farm.

A planning application for five detached residential houses near Pound Farm at Holme Lacy had been submitted. In the event that planning was approved for fewer houses, the size of the plot would be reduced to reflect this or sold with the College being recompensed if more houses are build

III. Treasury Management Annual Report 2014/15

This advised Members on activities for the year ended 31 July 2015. The report was based on the Code of Practice issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy for Treasury Management in Public Services. Interest received was outlined. The College had paid some of the capital off its bank loan leaving £1M outstanding. The account with the Bank of Scotland had been closed in the summer. This was in response to the low interest rate. Funds have been moved to the Barclay 100 day deposit account.

IV. Financial Regulations

Members were asked to approve continuation of the current financial regulations. These are based on an approved format.

V. Skills Funding Agency correspondence: College Plan 2015/17

Members noted correspondence which confirmed that the Skills Funding Agency concurred with the College's self assessed grades for financial health until 2017 as 'good'. This letter had been extended this year providing additional comments requesting a stronger commentary; however, the Finance Manager had compared the commentary with the Financial Planning Handbook and did not identify any areas were amiss.

The College's dashboard would be presented to the Board for information.

L Watkins

The Committee agreed:

- To note the update on capital projects
- No amendments were required to the Financial Regulations
- To note the Treasury Management Annual Report 2015/17
- To note Skills Funding Agency correspondence and College's financial health

7. Any other Business

- I. A Member asked about progress to take over the Funding Agency contracts from County Training. Due diligence would commence by PWC and Eversheds to do financial and legal reviews respectively. It was anticipated that reports would be available by the Governors' workshop in February.
- II. Leases for premises at Ludlow College had been revised by the College's solicitor and forwarded to the Foundation's solicitor. These were based on rates which were acceptable to the College and Foundation.
- III. The Board had approved to sub-contract £87,000. MIS data showed a shortfall of c£350,000 for the current year. The Committee were asked to recommend that the Board sub contract £350,000 to The Skills Network; who had been used to sub contract provision since 2010. This would equate to c850 students.

The Committee agreed: -

- To recommend that the Board sub contract £350,000 to The Skills Network; who had been used to sub contract provision since 2010

8. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 9 March 2016 commencing at 12.30 pm.

Signed as a true record of proceedings

Chair: **Date:**.....