



MINUTES

**of the meeting of the Finance and Employment Committee
held on Wednesday 11 March 2015**

Present: - Dr Alan Lavers (Chair)
Mr James Caird
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 four Members were present.

- | | Action |
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| <p>1. Apologies for Absence
Mr Tony Ford</p> | |
| <p>2. Declaration of Interests
James Caird: Trustee of The Foundation Ludlow.</p> | |
| <p>3. I. Minutes of the Last Meeting
The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2014 as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>II. Matters Arising from the Minutes
No Matters</p> | |
| <p>4. Employment Reports
The Director of Personnel presented the following reports: -</p> <p>I. Health and Safety Report</p> <p>A. There were 2 RIDDOR incidents during the period from 1 September 2014 to 31 January 2015, with a total of 84 recorded accidents. It was noted that the Director of Personnel provided a breakdown of staff and student numbers to the Health and Safety Committee in order to compare these numbers with the number of accidents. There was concern about the high number of incidents in animal care concluding that the majority were minor, such as scratches and bites from animals. To mitigate this, the Health and Safety Advisor was working with Team Leaders to prevent accidents and address peak periods following holidays.</p> <p>B. First aiders at Hereford Campus had decreased. Staff have been invited to undertake first aid training to ensure the College meets First Aid at Work</p> | |

Regulations.

- C. All College risk assessments will be available for managers to access and share on Moodle.
- D. The minutes of the Health and Safety Committee were noted including plans to have a defibrillator at Holme Lacy Campus and proposed changes to the safe driving policy.
- E. Stress related matters are currently the most common cause of absence in the country. The College had low levels of stress related absence. A detailed analysis was being prepared to include long term and work related absence.
- F. A Member asked about actions to address ventilation in the welding workshops to ensure that the College meets requirements. An action plan was being prepared and a report awaited from an external consultant.
- G. A Member mentioned that there were some holes in the roof in the building used by RDA. The Director of Personnel would investigate.

II. Staff Report

Members asked if the transfer to the new payroll provider had gone smoothly. This was confirmed which was also an improvement to the spreadsheet system used previously. A Member asked if the annual saving of £6000 was realistic. Costs are being finalised but would still show a financial saving. These would increase marginally to reflect some additional services.

III. Shared Parental Leave Policy

The policy was based on the Eversheds model policy to meet requirements of the Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014. It was acknowledged that it would be complex to administer the policy as it could involve liaison with the employer of the College's staff member.

IV. Sickness Absence Policy

The policy formalised and standardised procedures to ensure staff understand the protocol whilst also providing guidance to Managers.

V. Return to Work Interview

This policy had been prepared in conjunction with the sickness absence policy. The trigger point for return to work interviews by an employee's absence had been reduced from 10 days to 5 days. The College provides support to staff working closely with Occupational Health Services.

Policies would be sent to the Unions for observations. A Member asked if contracts of employment would be affected; these would remain unchanged as they already include adherence to College policy.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the reports presented by the Director of Personnel.
- To adopt the Shared Parental Leave Policy
- To adopt the Return to Work Interview Policy
- To adopt the Sickness Absence Policy

5. Finance Reports

I. Management Accounts to 31 January 2015

- A. There is currently an operating deficit of £160,000 at the end of the first three months against a planned budget outturn of £9,774.
- B. Tuition fees income is £149,000 below budget; this was due to under-recruitment of full time adult learners. It would be unlikely that this income would be recovered.
- C. The bank balance, including KSP Limited, was £3.1M; this had decreased with additional expenditure on capital projects on Holme Lacy Campus.
- D. Contribution by Faculties: Land-Based Studies 27%, Technology Studies 47%, Community Studies 54% and Ludlow College 39%.
- E. Income diversity remained unchanged.
- F. Performance indicators remained positive.

II. Capital Projects Update

Progress of capital projects at Holme Lacy Campus was outlined. £200,000 LEP funding had been requested for receipt in April 2015 to allocate towards equipment for the motor vehicle, welding and agriculture workshop. The LEP had subsequently confirmed funding would not be provided until April 2016. Funding could not be retrospective, therefore, the College would have to use its existing equipment in the workshops as this would need to be purchased to qualify for funding. Members were disappointed and tasked the Director of Finance to pursue LEP to release funding in the current financial year to enable the College to provide new equipment which would enhance students' learning experience.

E Rehm

A Member expressed concern that two workshops would be demolished and replaced with one workshop. The Director of Finance explained that information on utilisation of workshops showed that these would only be utilised for 50% of the teaching week.

III. Sub-Contracting 2014/15

This advised Members on activities to address the shortfall of the funding agreement. The budget had not included sub-contracting; however there was a £150,000 shortfall towards achieving the budget and the Funding Agency had awarded an additional £200,000 adult learning funding in January. Members were asked to consider issuing a contract to The Skills Network to sub-contract £350,000 which would ensure the College retained this in its funding agreement for the following year. Members sought assurance that The Skills Network had a good track record of quality and good success rates and that sub-contracting provision is

monitored. These were confirmed.

IV. Tuition Fee and Remission policy 2015/16

The policy was outlined noting that tuition and material fees should remain unchanged next year.

V. Budget Timetable and Parameters 2015/16

This set out the preparation of the one-year breakeven budget and financial forecast, risk management and disaster recovery policies. The College would be required to submit the budget by 31 July 2015. A Member asked about the class size policy of 18 learners in view of safety requirements on some courses. It was confirmed that safety requirements were met for specific courses. Some courses were delivered with fewer students subject to permission by management.

The Committee agreed:

- To note the management accounts to 31 January 2015
- To note the update on capital projects
- To recommend the Board approve sub-contracting £350,000 provision to Skills Network
- To approve the tuition fee and remission policy 2015/16
- To approve the budget timetable 2015/16 and budget parameters

6. Any other Business

The Principal reported that New College Telford had notified interested parties who submitted expressions of interest that following a recent Ofsted Inspection the Board would review options and the potential to delay a federation.

7. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 1 July 2015 commencing at 2.00 pm.