

MINUTES of the MEETING of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held in the Board Room, Inverness Campus on Thursday 5 December 2019.

PRESENT: Andy Gray, Kelly Mackenzie, Chris O'Neil, Gavin Ross, Tom Speirs, Hazel Allen
CHAIR: Gavin Ross
APOLOGIES: Neil Stewart
ATTENDING: Depute Principal Planning & Student Experience
Depute Principal Academic Development
Director of Finance
Interim Director of Finance
Director of Organisational Development
Director of External Relations
Board Secretary (cover – Aimee Cormack)

It was noted by the Chair that Carron McDiarmid and Brian Henderson are no longer on the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 26 September 2019 were **ACCEPTED** as a correct record and it was **RECOMMENDED** that they be approved and signed by the Chair.

2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Two items dated 7 December 2017 on the Outstanding Actions list were discussed. The Director of Finance advised that both items were affected by the ongoing resourcing issues, however both would be looked at moving forward with the confirmation of additional team resourcing. She confirmed that the action relating to debt write off falls under the wider debt control coming forward from the Finance team.

Finance regulations action has gone through scrutiny panel, some additional clarification required. ACTION will come to next Finance & General Purposes meeting in March 2020, proposal to adopt a 3-year cycle going forward.

Research centre annual report was noted as an ACTION for March.

The Director of External Relations advised the Committee that the CITB action had been included in the revised 5-year forecast at September 2019 F&GP meeting. The Chair requested this be built into wider a Finance project plan, Chris O'Neil advised it was being taken on as part of a management away day.

The Committee considered the other actions and **AGREED** which had been completed and could be removed, and those which were still outstanding and would remain on the list.

3. **POLICIES**

The Director of Finance spoke to her report and explained that the previous SFC fee waiver policy applied, a partnership-wide policy builds on this and clarifies what is reasonable regarding discretionary. No significant changes.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend to the Board of Management for approval.

4. **FUNDING APPLICATION TO THE FOUNDATION**

The Director of Finance spoke to her report and provided information regarding the ALF application for an artificial sports pitch on Campus. Initial application at design stage alluded that a further application for capital would follow. Director of Finance will add the confirmed Highland Council funding information to this application. The Depute Principal Planning & Student Experience provided a further funding update regarding this project to the Committee.

The Director of Finance confirmed there were three bids going forward, advising that two of these bids were agreed at previous F&GP meetings however ALF trustees haven't met since.

The Committee expressed concern at the future of ALF and the potential constraints in strategic movement if ALF is no longer available. Remaining limited funds should be used as seed capital for growth not continual sustainability of equipment replenishment. Financial planning and prioritisation are key. Chris O'Neil noted that the partnership council may afford a more coherent capital investment scheme.

The Committee noted to identify the risks regarding ALF funds and requested this be added to the risk register.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend that the Board approve the submission of the application to the Scottish Colleges Foundation.

5. **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (CONFIDENTIAL)**

The Director of External Relations spoke to her report. A short update regarding KTP Associates was provided, with Chris O'Neil providing further information. A presentation will follow at the next Board of Management meeting. The Director of External Relations provided context surrounding concerns with MA Hospitality figures and explained that more robust processes during enrolment were being implemented to address this.

Following a query relating to CREATE, the Director of External Relations advised the Committee that this function will shortly move into Research and come under the Director for Research & Innovation.

The Chair of the Committee noted the good news contained within the report.

6. **FINANCE MONITORING REPORT – OCTOBER 2019**

The Director of Finance provided a verbal update and extended an apology for the delayed papers. She advised that the figures would be reported and sent out within the days to follow.

The Director of Finance confirmed this item was for discussion only, no committee decision required.

7. CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT – OCTOBER 2019

The Director of Finance spoke to her report and recalled reduction in capital funding for this year. Following a query regarding the claiming of VAT on Research grant spends, the Director of Finance advised that VAT regulations had changed on Research in recent years and she assured the Committee that there was regular contact with the College's VAT advisor.

The Director of Organisational Development advised the Committee that the Estates & Campus Services manager was looking at capital spends which can be completed and invoiced by end March 2020. It was stated that any funds which cannot be spent should be offered to the other academic partners. The Director of Organisational Development gave further information to the committee on these plans and the Authority Change Notice (ACN) procedure through the NPD contract.

The Director of Finance briefly discussed key points relating to the Longman Demolition project. The Chair extended thanks to the wider IC team for a successful project.

8. FINANCE SYSTEM STATUS UPDATE (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Director of Finance provided a verbal update and explained that the planned system upgrade is going ahead. A confidential update was then given to the Committee.

The following items were included in the Agenda for noting only and therefore no discussion took place at the meeting.

9. GTFM REPORT (CONFIDENTIAL)

The Director of Organisational Development spoke to her report, noting the inclusion of a monthly report from GTFM with an ongoing action to produce an annual report. She advised that a settlement agreement on deductions from the new build is nearing completion and a Helpdesk Protocol has been agreed and implemented, assisting greatly with deductions being agreed. The Director of Organisational Development provided background information on priorities and deductions for context. The Chair noted the comprehensive report and the amount of work involved in procuring this and, more widely, the control of the FM contract. The Director of Organisational Development confirmed she would feed this back to the wider team.

10. ESTATES AND CAMPUS SERVICES REPORT

A report by the Estates and Campus Services Manager was provided to the Committee by the Director of Organisational Development with an update on developments over the last quarter in relation to campus matters.

11. AOCB

The Committee extended thanks to the Director of Finance for her service to the committee, the Director of Finance thanked the committee for their support.

A formal welcome was extended to the Interim Director of Finance.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 5 March 2020 at 9.00 a.m.

Signed on behalf of the Chair:



Date: 23/04/2020