

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: FGP2018-19/03
Date and time: Wednesday 27 February 2019 at 5.30pm
Location: Room 019

Members present: Margaret Cook, Brian Crichton, Deborah Hutchison, Harold Gillespie, Craig Ritchie

In attendance: Katrina Hodgson, Co-opted Board Member
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal (Academic)
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Andrea Saunders, Head of Finance
Gilbert Valentine, Head of Estates, for item 9
Maureen Masson, Secretary to the Board of Management

Apologies: David Littlejohn, Susan Hunter

Chair: Harold Gillespie
Minute Taker: Maureen Masson
Quorum: 3

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
7	Balanced Scorecard Review Balanced Scorecard for implementation during Academic Year 2019/20	Principal	For discussion and approval at next set of meetings
8	Learning Centres (closed) Include this item on the agenda for the next Board meeting	Secretary	Next Board meeting
9	Estates Update and Tenders Provide an update to the Board at next Board meeting	Depute Principal (Academic)	Next Board meeting

Minutes:

Item

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. Katrina Hodgson, a new co-opted Board Member, was welcomed to her first meeting of F&GPC. In the absence of the Chair,

Action

the Vice-Chair would lead the meeting.

2. Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda. The Committee noted there would be no HR paper for consideration as the Head of HR and OD was currently off sick.

3. Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item

There were no declarations of a conflict of interest.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 28 November 2018

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

4 Minutes of Meeting held on 25 September 2018

Action: Update templates in the new year

Action Update: complete

7.1 Estates Update

Action: Defer to Audit Committee on whether an estates risk relating to funding be included as a separate risk in the Risk Register or given greater prominence in the existing estates-related risk

Action Update: Complete. Audit Committee had discussed the estate risk at the last meeting

7.2 Residences – Option Appraisal

Action: Include the residence matter on the Board agenda for the December meeting

Action Update: Complete – the Board approved the recommendation made by F&GPC at the last meeting

8 & 9.1 Implementing Lean and Efficiency Savings

Action: Provide an update bi-annually on lean and efficiency savings

Action Update: a paper will come to the next F&GPC meeting on this

10 HR Report

Action: Prepare an HR report for next meeting including on sickness absence figures

Action Update: This was not on the agenda due to unforeseen circumstances

6 Accounts

***6.1 Perth College Management Accounts – 6 months to 31 January 2019**

The Head of Finance introduced the paper. The pay and non-pay expenditure were on track to the end of period 5 and finance staff continued to work closely with budget holders to ensure expenditure remained within budget.

The Committee welcomed the new format for the accounts and agreed they were more user friendly. A query was raised in relation to estates expenditure which was higher than expected, but the Head of Finance explained that the figures would be brought back on track when estates income was released. All income streams were under review and there was nothing of concern. The Committee noted that additional government funding would cover the pay element of national bargaining, but that the cost of living element of the pay award was not funded and had to be met from College budgets.

Accounting for tuition fees would be revised to make that clearer going forward. A number of other queries were clarified and the Committee noted the accounts at the six month position. It was agreed to remove reference to named individuals.

***6.2 Perth College Group Forecast to year end 31 July 2019**

The Vice Principal updated the Committee on the forecast to the year-end. The forecast could not be finalised at this stage because of a number of factors in relation to the permanisation of staff. In addition, further work was required to clarify an inconsistency that had emerged in the balance sheet, and advice was being sought from the internal auditors, as there may be reputational risk exposure. Once the advice was available, a full update would be provided to the Board.

***6.3 AST Management Accounts – 6 months to 31 January 2019 - Closed**

The Committee noted the accounts and commentary for the 6 month position. There were no matters of concern at this stage. A re-forecasting exercise was currently ongoing. This would reflect an increase in staff costs relating vacancies which had been filled and the pay award, which had been accepted. The Committee found it helpful to receive the debt profile and the Head of Finance explained work ongoing to manage debt patterns.

The Principal reported that the post of General Manager was about to be advertised.

7 Reporting

***7.1 Balanced Scorecard**

The Principal introduced the F&GPC Balanced Scorecard indicators. The Principal also outlined that the Balanced Scorecard was under review and that a new, more strategic scorecard would be developed for Academic Year 2019-20. The scorecard aimed to show progress against strategic plan deliverables and the Committee further noted that a new Revised Strategic Plan would be developed during 2020.

Principal

8. Learning Centres (Closed)

The Depute Principal introduced this item. The papers set out the findings of a fact-finding exercise conducted by the Head of Student Experience and the current financial position associated with the operation of the Learning Centres. The Committee noted the rationale for the arguments to close the centres particularly given the current funding environment and that the majority of the offer was for leisure, not learning purposes.

The Committee discussed the impact this decision might have in relation to student recruitment. F&GPC noted the College works closely with schools to promote opportunities but it was recognised that outreach to rural schools was more challenging compared to city schools.

Following discussion of all of the evidence, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the closure of the three learning centres. F&GPC further recommended that the press and PR aspects related to the closure of the leisure centres be carefully managed to minimise any adverse publicity.

Secretary

9 Estates Update (Closed)

The Director of Estates attended to present this item.

Condition Survey

The Committee noted the College condition survey outcomes and the items that were identified for renewal/upgrade. SFC funding would address some of the priority issues, but a funding gap remained for some other estates work.

CCTV

The Committee noted the benefits of overhauling and extending the CCTV system across campus. No formal approval was required for this project as this total cost was below the delegated levels.

Goodlyburn Boiler Replacement

The original tender for this was undertaken in 2016-17 and a preferred tenderer was identified, but no funding was identified at that time. Funding was now available and the work would be undertaken during the summer of 2019. The Committee noted that the preferred tenderer would abide by the original estimate adjusted for an inflationary uplift. F&GPC **approved** the appointment of the preferred tenderer at the agreed amount uplifted for inflation.

Properties

Flat at 28 Morris Court

The Board had already agreed this disposal at an earlier meeting.

Chief Caretakers house at Appin Terrace entrance

F&GPC noted the merits and demerits of selling the property and **approved** the recommendation that the house is retained for appropriate College use.

Lead caretakers house at Brahan Entrance

The Committee **approved** the recommendation that the house is retained for appropriate College use pending developments related to the Tay Cities deal.

Flat at Webster providing accommodation for the student warden

The Committee **approved** the recommendation that the house is retained for College use.

Provision of callout responses and out-of-hours

The Committee **noted** the proposals to review the callout arrangements.

Kinross Learning Centre

The Committee **approved** the recommendation to review the viability of use of the Learning Centre, dependent on the Board's decision on the future of the Learning Centres.

Tenders

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the extension of the Sodexo tender for a further year. This would provide sufficient time for a tender timeline to be established and the advert to be placed in the OJEU. The residences tender would also be extended for one year.

Secretary

10 Human Resources Update

No update provided

11 Joint Negotiating Committee

The minutes for the following meetings were noted:

- Support Staff – 13 December 2018
- Lecturers – 13 December 2018

F&GPC noted that a further strike day was planned for 6 March 2019 and that further action 'short of a strike' was planned.

11 Date of Next meeting

22 May 2019 at 5.30pm

12 Review of Meeting

The Committee agreed the meeting had covered its Terms of Reference.

Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI(S)A). Certain exemptions apply: financial information relating to procurement items still under tender, legal advice from College lawyers, items related to national security.

Notes taken to help record minutes are also subject to Freedom of Information requests, and should be destroyed as soon as minutes are approved.

Status of Minutes – Open with removal of Papers 3, 5 and 6

An **open** item is one over which there would be no issues for the College in releasing the information to the public in response to a freedom of information request.

A **closed** item is one that contains information that could be withheld from release to the public because an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.

The College may also be asked for information contained in minutes about living individuals, under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. It is important that fact, rather than opinion, is recorded.

Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998? **Yes** **No**