BHASVIC

**BRIGHTON HOVE & SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9TH MARCH 2022 AT 6.00 P.M.
ROOM 538, ELMS BUILDING.**

Present: William Baldwin (Principal), Julia Holgate Turner (Governor – Support Staff), Mick McLean (Governor), Chris Newson (Governor), Marcus Palmer (Governor and Chair of Resources), Sandra Prail (Chair of Governors).

Chair: Marcus Palmer

In attendance: Neil Perry (Vice-Chair of Governors, Audit Committee Member and HR Lead Governor), Genevieve Walter (HR Manager) – for item 2.1 HR, Jacquie Punter (Director for Digital Strategy) for Digital Update, Louise Pennington (Governance Director/Clerk).

Mick McLean and Sandra Prail joined the meeting via Teams (owing to Covid positive test) but only for the Digital items on the agenda, after which they left the meeting.

The meeting remained quorate.

NOTE: FOR EASE OF REFERENCE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM GOVERNORS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN BOLD ITALICS

SECTION 1: ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

1.1   Apologies for Absence and Welcomes item 3.9

Apologies: Mark Snape (Co-opted Member), Tom Wolfenden and Jutta Knapp (Assistant Principal)

1.2   **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 22nd November 2021 – main business. Refer 6.1 for confidential minutes.**

Both sets of minutes (main and confidential) were approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

1.3   Matters Arising

The contents of the actions' schedule were noted, including those actions which had now been completed.

SARAP updates: Noting that via the last Q & C Committee meeting, which updated the Committee on the questions raised by Governors at the last SARAP meetings in the Autumn Term 2021, that the issues which related to computer science and DBS (disclosure and barring service), should be reported to the next Resources Committee the following updates were provided:

- Computer Science SARAP: William Baldwin reported that day to day computer science continue to work effectively, but some of the online coursework issues still need further attention, which are under review at the moment. ***In response to a question from the Committee, the Principal explained that issues related to the fact that Computer Science Students expected a certain amount of freedom regarding creativity within the Computer Science syllabus, but often preferred to use their own lap tops on site, which potentially created certain network security issues. Currently, the Director of Digital Strategy is reviewing solutions and risk relating to the College's network, with the IT Department and also noted that Mick McLean was helping with this, with the aim of providing sufficient flexibility to students to enable them to be creative.***
- DBS Renewals – the issues relating to Governors' DBS renewals was noted, particularly the fact that without any forewarning, Governors were being sent automatic renewal messages. It was resolved that HR Department should be requested to send through advance notice of renewal dates, so that governors were prepared for this. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

1.4   Declaration of Interests – None

Owing to the fact that 2 Governors had joined the meeting via Teams, it was resolved to deal with the Digital Update first, so that they could then leave the meeting.

1.5   Principal's Update

The Principal gave the following update to the Committee based around resource implications:

- Covid: The revision to Government guidelines from 1st April and the transition period currently underway at College was noted, the latter of which enabled Staff and Students to test if they have symptoms, and to stay at home if testing positive, in line with NHS advice.   Going forward, the advice to Staff and students will be to stay at home if they have Covid related symptoms and are likely to spread disease, given that testing won't be carried out post April. However, the College is keen to ensure that Students are discouraged from being absent from College owing to any mild cold related symptom. This incompatible aim was noted.
- Absence rates: the higher than average rates in respect of both Staff and Students were noted as was the national trend for this: Staff: 2019 to February half term, absence was 2.3%, which compares to the current figure for the same period in 2022, at 4.4%, in effect doubling and by the year end the absences levels will have worsened (adjustments were also made to avoid a distortion owing to 3 cases of long-term sickness leave). Students: 20% absence rate on first day back after February half term 2021; during 2019 the College sent 3.7% of Students (their parents) an unauthorised absence text message on that day compared to 11.6% in 2022. The national absence figures are running at around 7% this year compared to 2019 (source: Ofsted).   It was recognised that there has been some flexibility in the College's usual attendance procedures owing to the impact of Covid , but going forward this will be tightened up with a return to compliance with the usual attendance systems and all unauthorised attendances will be followed up, both in terms of lessons and tutorials etc.
- The Principal also reported that Staff counselling services were being fully utilised.
- Curriculum and Staffing:
- Staff – 5 members of Staff have given notice to leave at Easter, which is a higher than usual turnover at this point in the year compared to pre-Covid times. SLT have been interviewing this week for a replacement Head of Faculty and a Biology Teacher. Regarding the former, a replacement for long time employed, Tarquin Grossman, has been sought and from 29 high calibre applications, 12 were shortlisted, with an internal appointment having been made.
- 40 GLH curriculum project – the Committee was updated on progress with this and reference was made to the paper considered at the recent Q & C Committee which would be going to Corporation for approval. The Committee noted the additional 8.7% funding in respect of this, with some flexibility regarding the criteria for this additional provision – noting that the College had no spare classroom space or additional teachers to delivery above that already offered, hence the College was looking at various other options including enrichment, work experience etc *In response to a question from the Committee, the Principal advised that the impact of the additional income, should reduce the staff cost ratio by approximately 4%, whilst at the same time, showing an improved cash position in the accounts, the latter of which may enable a greater investment to be made in certain areas including accommodation and IT .*
- Reference was made to in year additional funding growth of £470k – referenced in the management accounts – see below, with a year-end cash surplus projected to have increased by £150k.
- Year 2 Examinations: until a final decision is made by the DfE the College has had to put contingency arrangements in place in case examinations don't go ahead. This includes mock examinations (February 2022) (which may or may not be included in the final assessments), following by 2 other assessments (to achieve the final TAG – Teacher Assessment Grade), the third of which may not take place if it's likely that examinations will go ahead. The pressure on Students and teachers owing to this uncertainty, was noted.
- Net Zero Plan – refer paper below, but reference was made to the additional funding in respect of carbon literacy programme, which BHASVIC was leading on in the area.
- Skills Bill is going through the final parliamentary stages.
- Schools White Paper is expected to be released soon and this will be of interest to SFC, in terms of any impact on A Level provision and emphasis upon academies, including the impact this may have upon Brighton and Hove Schools.

- ESFA – (Education and Skills Funding Agency) – there has been a review and restructuring within the sector with a transfer of certain responsibilities to the DfE (policy post 16), within only funding delivery resting with the ESFA going forward.

Thanks were recorded to William Baldwin for his update to the Committee.

SECTION 2: HR AND RELATED MATTERS

2.1   Termly Update on HR and Related Matters

Genevieve Walter, HR Manager gave the following update to Governors:

a)   Employers and solicitors are awaiting the outcome of the Supreme Court regarding the case of Harpur Trust v Brazel (case of a music teacher who challenged her employers' definition of her employee status, arguing that she should be given the same holiday pay as a full year worker). In respect of the College, this could impact the College in respect of term time only annual leave. If the Court finds in favour, the financial impact on the College will equate to approximately £20k per year; Government legislation may also be instigated to limit claims retrospectively to a maximum of 2 years.

b)   The Committee was reminded that NI would increase from 1st April together with the minimum wage.

c)   Counselling Service – this has been utilised to maximum capacity by Staff over the last year, with 7 requests for counselling sessions being made within the first weeks of this term and issues being discussed are not solely work related.

d)   **College employment tribunal update – the outcome has been made in the College's favour and a cost hearing was held last week, with the complainant having offered the College £10K compensation which the College has accepted. (the individual has 6 months to raise the month and will be able to pay this in monthly instalments). –**Thanks were recorded to Gen Walter who then left the meeting.

SECTION 3: RESOURCES AND RELATED MATTERS

3.1 Management Accounts for the Three Months to 31st January 2022

The Management Accounts were noted and the Committee was reminded that a copy of the final version would be included in the Corporation Meeting papers for information. **ACTION: Jutta Knapp**

In the absence of Jutta Knapp, the Principal highlighted the following key points:

- Noted the revisions made to the reflect some of the guidance within the latest Management Accounts Good Practice Guide, particularly benefited Governors, with the new graphical presentation and narrative. Marcus Palmer confirmed that he had held discussions with Jutta Knapp regarding various new elements in compliance with the Guide.
- In year growth in funding of £470K was highlighted, together with the increase of £150K to year end cash surplus.
- Non-pay costs – noted that the carbon literacy budget had not been included, but that it was an in/out transaction.
- Variances were noted.
- The Committee agreed that the new presentation and content was very helpful.
- Regarding the action from the last meeting, to consult with some non-Resources Committee Governors, it was agreed to raise this at Corporation (via Principal's Report), giving Governors an opportunity to report back and that this should be noted as an action in the Management Accounts front sheet. **ACTION: Jutta Knapp/All Governors**
- Other feedback from the Committee:

- Page 18 the down arrow next to the reference to October – it was suggested that another column could be included giving the percentage change in order to provide more guidance and assurance to Governors. However, it was also suggested that this would normally be expected to be raised as a question by the Committee and the Principal agreed to discuss this with the Assistant Principal. **ACTION: William Baldwin/Jutta Knapp**
- Page 25 Cash Flow graph – the Committee identified that the formatting on the X axis of the graph, needed amending. **ACTION: Juta Knapp**

3.2 Adult Education and Skills: Potential Additional Income Generation?

Owing to the confidential nature of the business, this item was moved to confidential minutes.

3.3 Net Zero Action Plan

The contents of the paper introduced by William Baldwin were considered by the Committee, highlighting the following:

- Capital costs: Gas boiler replacements with heat pumps (cost approx. £420k plus VAT) and we would need to undertakefeasibility studies on the appropriateness of this technology.
- Even with heat pumps installed by 2030, the College would have to offset about 200 tonnes of carbon relating to electricity use generated by carbon sources, noting that the national grid would not be able to achieve net zero until post 2030. Should the College not achieve net zero within the proposed timescale, it would have to consider adopting measures to offset its carbon output, within a proposed timescale and with an agreed approach to achieving this.
- Achieving the proposed net zero goal, will involve a significant capital spend over time.
- The College, based its stakeholder engagement strategy,be liaising with Students, Staff, Governors, local community to obtain views on what offsetting the College's carbon footprint might look like; groups have already been set up in respect of Students (Climate society).
- Other factors to take into account re proposals such as replacing the boilers and consequential capital cost, including the fact that the existing boilers will need to be replaced anyway at some point (£200k approx..). The cost of the heat pumps will also come down, over time.
- An asset audit is being completed at present on boiler replacement schedule.
- Along with the engagement activities mentioned earlier, a feasibility study will need to be instigated to assess the various options, along with assessing the timeline, the latter of which will need to consider the decision making regarding 2030 offset or alternative commence offset in 2025 on a partial offset with the aim of achieving 100% by 2030. The cost impact of achieving net zero within various timeframes, will have to be analysed in terms of the identifying any impact on the curriculum provision, together with taking into account other measures which might assist in achieving net zero more easily by 2030, eg building up cash reserves, where possible. Potential reputation damage would also have to be considered if the plans and timeline were not workable.

   The Committee recognised the difficulties ahead and decisions which would need to be taken, once further investigation and assessments have been made.
   1. It was agreed the College should complete a feasibility study into using heat pumps in the main building and college house. 2. It was agreed the College should look to engage a representative group in 'how' the college will offset residual emissions in 2030. **ACTION: William Baldwin**

3.4 Premises Update

William Baldwin gave the following update to the Committee:

- Project to replace the huts (Student Services Centre, classrooms) is at stage where outline drawings have been drafted by HNW Architects. A space utilisation exercise has also been commissioned to assist the College in submitting a capital funding bid at the next round, with a better chance of success. The anticipated post 16 capital fund bid to be made available this March (with maximum bid submission expected to be in the region of £4M), but it's now likely to be announced later in the year and the College would like to

be well-prepared to submit a bid. The new bid is likely to include Student Services, classrooms, Library, Guidance, ALS, Coffee shop and social space.

3.5   Termly Digital Update including Dashboard and Cyber Security

As recorded above, it was agreed to take this item at the start of the meeting, so that Jacquie Punter and Mick McLean (Digital Lead Governor) could then leave the meeting. Jacquie Punter (Director of Digital Strategy) presented the report and additional comments provided by Mick McLean and this was then followed by questions. The following points were recorded:

- Plan follows a revised format, based on themes as agreed at the previous meeting, based on the College Development Plan (CDP) template and the Committee welcomed the new presentation and content.
- Key work in progress is focusing upon cyber security issues
- The College is following a 10 step process towards improving cyber security, with advice received from Mick McLean, with the aim of achieving Cyber Essentials, notwithstanding that the latter continues to evolve.
- Currently the College is working through its security measures, infrastructure, mobile devices, BYOD (bring your own device) Staff and there's also a staff training event covering this during the next Inset week.
- Regardless of the above progress, BHASVIC, like all educational institutions remains on high alert for anything unexpected which may arise.
- Other developments – progressing well with cloud migration.
- Other projects which have more of a curriculum focus – looking at options, learner management systems, to replace Advantage; the Learning Technologist (Julia Holgate-Turner), is leading on progressing the College' communication platform, which may need some investment; the data protection is also progressing.
- Other focus for year end is the digital upskilling plans for Staff with the aim of delivering a programme planned for batched skills development in order to support moving forward with curriculum areas.

QUESTIONS:

- The Committee questioned the Myday Student communication platform proposal and Jacquie Punter confirmed that the College had negotiated a trial version which had been installed and will be tested going forward.   This is not fully licenced which has kept the cost low for this year and will give the College an opportunity to test this with Staff and Students. The company's recent merger was noted of which the College had been aware prior to accepting the trial version.   Chris Newson agreed to discuss more of the detail with Jacquie Punter outside the meeting.
- The continual evolution of the Cyber Essentials initiative was raised again, with Governors querying whether there had been an increase in cyber attacks across the FE sector. In response Jacquie Punter advised that JISC had warned Colleges to be more alert to potential attacks and had provided a checklist. The College does have a new fire wall and anti-virus in place and a dashboard is also being introduced to provide the necessary support.   However, Jacquie Punter informed the Committee that the IT Department had not seen a meaningful increase in malicious cyber activity,. The College is planning to recruit a cybersecurity specialist technician to take on overseeing this role.
- The Committee also queried the fact that the College had still not secured a second phone line on to the site and in response, Jacquie Punter explained that the second line was planned initially as a component with the new Elms Building and that the intention, once the required survey had been completed, was to connect the line to the Exchange in Hove.   However, to ensure a sufficiently resilient line, the connection proposal changed to the Withdean Exchange, which proved much more costly owing to the need to dig a channel around the building. Discussions were held to resolve this and the project stalled. Further issues arose owing to Openreach (operates UK's digital network), who had already billed Mace (Project Manager for BHASVIC), without having put in the second line. This issue is still being resolved and Mace are currently trying to recoup the money before progressing work on the line and paying out the costs for this, before the charge paid out before has been repaid. The College is also preparing an alternative plan to connect the old building to the Withdean Exchange and the Elms Building to the Hove Exchange, which would reduce the

overall costs. This would also then provide the resilience needed by the College. Governors queried the decision to wait for the refund prior to commencing the works, bearing in mind its important and assuming that the College had sufficient cash to proceed. In response, Jacquie Punter advised that it wasn't a cash flow issue, but more one of principle and noting that if the money wasn't refunded or disputed, this would be an overspend on the budget.   It was agreed that the Principal, Assistant Principal (Resources) and Digital Director should take this matter forward to resolve the situation as soon as possible, taking into account the option of utilising some of the additional income received this year and noting that it was essential to finalise the works this year. **ACTION: William Baldwin/Jutta Knapp/Jacquie Punter**

- At this point Mick McLean endorsed the report and Jacquie Punter's presentation, noting that they had had a number of remote meetings this year to discuss the various digital issues and projects. Regarding cyber security in addition to the points made earlier in the meeting, he confirmed that the approach which the College was taking would be the most effective, covered all bases, security hardware, staff training etc and that the actions taken or being progress were essential to mitigate risks to the College's security. He noted that they had also looked at incident response and identity response issues, with all work in this area based on a mitigation strategy rather than avoidance and confirming that cyber security will always have to remain on the risk register.

As there were no other questions, the Chair ended the hybrid part of the meeting and Mick McLean, Sandra Prail left the meeting, along with Jacquie Punter, who was thanked for her report.

3.6 Risk Assurance

William Baldwin introduced the paper which detailed the risks within the Risk Register, which were attributable to this Committee, the contents of which were noted, and included the key risks scoring 6 or 9. The Committee endorsed the view that adequate assurance from SLT was obtained by the Committee and that risks were being managed with an appropriate level of mitigation.   This assurance will be reported to the next Audit Committee. **ACTION: Jutta Knapp**

The Principal reported that the latest Risk Management Policy had been adapted with the aim of providing a better spread in terms of scoring (impact and likelihood). Hence, there are now fewer risks with score 6 or 9, namely lack of capacity and failure of IT Systems.

Regarding the significant increase in energy costs, the Committee was advised that currently these were fixed until the Summer 2022; £20K has been added to the draft budget in respect of additional energy costs for next year, but this may well have to be reviewed and revised next term.

The Committee also raised other risk concerns including pension costs, particularly in light of the current instability in the markets, although noting that the College had no control over this and secondly, the failure to deter and detect financial fraud. Regarding the latter risk, the Committee was reminded about the work ongoing, lead by the Digital Director and IT Department, to meet the Cyber Essentials (Government backed scheme to help organisations, against the most common cyber attacks). The Committee was also reminded that the Audit Committee had responsibility for Fraud and that this was a standing item on each Meeting's agenda.

SECTION 4: CONSENT AGENDA

POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS - none

(where there are no questions or comments received from Committee members prior to the meeting, the policies and documents will be recommended to Corporation for approval.)

SECTION5: OTHER MATTERS

5.1 Any Other Business - None

5.2   Date of Next Meeting – Monday 20th June 2022

SECTION 6: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS – refer separate record

6.1   Confidential Minutes from Last Meeting held on 22nd November 2021 - The minutes were approved by the Committee and the Chair authorised to sign them.

6.2   Matters Arising – none.

6.3   Any Other Business (Confidential Matters) - None.

Louise Pennington

Chair…………………………………………………..DATE……………………………………