

CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE

BOARD OF GOVERNORS – FINANCE AND PREMISES COMMITTEE

The Committee met at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 28 February 2018 in the Conference Room at the College.

Members present:

Richard Ainscough, Chair (F)
Matthew Ainge
Nick Burnham, Principal
Len Hampson (F)
Andrew Wygladala (F)

Officers in attendance:

Bob Deed, Clerk
Katie O'Reilly, VP – Finance & Resources
Millie Kozuszkiewicz, Premises Manager
Claire Walbank, College Accountant

MINUTES

1 Opening prayer

The meeting commenced with a prayer

2 Welcome, introductions and apologies

Apologies were received from Helen Seachurn.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of Finance and Premises Committee held on Wednesday 22 November 2017 were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair (file copy entered).

5 Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising where not covered by agenda items.

6 Risk register: termly update

The Committee asked about risks where gross and net risks were the same. The Committee asked for these to be reviewed.

In the case of the High Needs funding risk, the Clerk as Vice Principal noted that he had been to a recent meeting with Lancashire County Council. The Principal explained that following a consultation exercise, the cuts for 2018/19 would be limited but there were likely to be more significant.???

7 Premises update

The Premises Manager introduced the Premises update. She noted the recent planned maintenance works and the plans for railings around the St James building following the granting of planning permission.

The Premises Manager noted the tenders for drainage works at Factory Lane. The Vice Principal explained that the College was exploring funding opportunities. The Lancashire Football Association was positive on more extensive improvements.

The Premises Manager explained that the ESFA was planning to visit colleges following the Grenfell disaster. The ESFA had not been in touch.

8 Health & safety report

The Premises Manager introduced the Health & Safety report which set out the recent work including the policy review. The Chair noted the reduction in accidents on site. The Principal suggested that the new timetable may have contributed to the reduction with fewer students being on site due to “trapped time”.

The Premises Manager noted the recent physical security audit. She pointed out that the consultant had noted both strengths and scope for improvement. The Vice Principal noted changes undertaken, including a reduced phase on automatic doors, and planned actions, including the changes in the door configuration at St Augustine’s.

12 Policy Review: Health & Safety policy review (taken earlier in the agenda)

The Premises Manager noted that the only amendments in the Policy were the changes in job title and terminology.

The Committee resolved to recommend the revised Health & Safety policy to the Governing Body for approval. Clerk

The Clerk noted that the policy appendices had been included in the uploaded Other Information pack but apologised that the appendices had been deleted from Office 365 earlier in the day.

9 Property strategy

The Vice Principal noted that following the outcome of the City Deal board meeting in the autumn, College management had been reviewing our accommodation needs and options. This included the need for internal and external improvements to the Larkhill Road entrance to reduce the issues of crowds of students at peak times, lower the likelihood of students over-spilling on to Larkhill Road and enhance the physical security of the main building. The Principal noted that this was in the context of the College’s successful re-orientation of the College onto Larkhill Road and Princes Street as opposed to the corner opposite the shops on Manchester Road. The Principal also noted that this was intended to restrict access to the College site.

The Vice Principal circulated images of the proposed entrance works.

The Committee asked about the entrance for visitors. The Vice Principal said that the option of including the reception by the Larkhill Road entrance had been considered but rejected. The Principal noted that the Larkhill Road side entrance could be used as a dedicated visitor entrance.

The Deputy Chair asked about the affordability of both the main entrance works and a new build. The Principal noted that the College was generating cashflow to finance essential investments in the College estate. The Vice Principal said that the College would also seek ESFA Condition Improvement funding for expansion projects.

The Principal explained that the College was considering a site relatively close to the main College buildings which offers space for a 12 classroom building. The discussions with the landowner have not yet been started. The College commenced discussions through an intermediary.

The Committee asked about pressures on College accommodation as a result of rising demographics. The Principal noted that the College is expecting a stable position with student numbers in 2018/19 so demographic pressures were not immediate. However, he stressed the financial sustainability need for the College to absorb rising numbers and increase funding income as demography changes.

The Principal noted that Lancashire County Council was supportive of the College but unable or unwilling to provide Basic Needs funding.

On the subject of the main entrance, the Vice Principal explained that the project would be completed within eight weeks from early July although this was being discussed with consultants.

The Committee supported the College seeking planning permission and preparing to appoint a contractor.

The Deputy Chair asked about the possibility of asbestos in the area of any works. The Vice Principal said that asbestos had been removed but a further survey would be commissioned.

10 College Finance Report for January 2018

The College Accountant presented the College Finance Report for October 2017. She noted the forecast outturn has improved by £116k since the last College Finance Report in October and drew attention to the positive movement in the pay:income ratio.

The Principal noted that the national pay negotiations had been concluded with a pay settlement of 1% with 2% for points 1 to 6. The estimated cost was 1.1% nationally. The College Accountant explained that the cost over the budgeted assumption was £8,000.

The Committee members present noted that they were content that the Chair of the Governing Body should use Chair's action to approve the implementation of the national Pay Settlement for teaching staff.

The College Accountant outlined the balance sheet and noted the year-on-year increase in cash of £1 million.

The Chair noted the healthy financial performance of Newman Business Limited.

The Vice Chair asked about how the College tracked where early leavers went to. The Principal explained that the College did work on this. He noted that most leave for other colleges and schools which may be closer to home while some leave for employment or apprenticeships.

The Committee discussed the low levels of capital expenditure. The Vice Principal noted planned IT investments including network switches and Sophos software. The Principal noted that the College had eased back on capital investment in anticipation of the New Build in the grounds. He noted that the College would be spending on the property strategy works discussed earlier.

11 Budget update

The Vice Principal introduced the Budget Update report and highlighted the cost pressures on all colleges. She expected the final proposed budget in the summer to be close to the indicative figure of an operating surplus of £451k.

The Vice Principal noted that the core ESFA allocation had been confirmed which was close to the indicative figure.

The Principal noted that there might be opportunities for more students to take CORE Maths which would generate funding income with the new Maths premium. He noted that the College had run CORE Maths for BTEC students as a three-year pilot. He explained that it was well-regarded by teaching staff but the pilot had come to an end.

The Vice Principal updated the Committee on the College's success in obtaining £73k of ESDFA Work Placement Capacity Development Funding in 2018/19 preparation for T-levels from 2020.

The Chair asked about the College's Higher Education provision. The Vice Principal explained that growth was expected with the College introducing a BA Top-up into the portfolio of Higher Education provision.

The Principal noted the pay assumption in the document and highlighted the problem of the pressure from unions for an end to real-terms reductions in pay conflicting with the pressure for colleges on funding.

12 Policy review

The Clerk as Vice Principal introduced the paper and confirmed that he would insert the Values and Mission Statement within the Financial Regulations document.

The Chair asked that the Vice Principal review the wording on banking controls in the light of electronic payments and similar technology.

The Committee resolved to recommend the revised Financial Regulations to the Governing Body for approval subject to the Vice Principal reviewing the wording on banking controls.

**VP – F&R
Clerk**

The Clerk as Vice Principal explained the context of the changes being brought in by GDPR and the new Data Protection Bill. He noted that the College had used a template provided by a specialist consultancy, IT Governance, to replace the previous policy. The template policy has been tailored to the College's own circumstances and structure. He noted that this was part of a wider project of GDPR-readiness.

The Committee resolved to recommend the proposed Data Protection Policy to the Governing Body for approval.

13 Determination of any items to be treated as Confidential

No issues were deemed to be confidential by the Committee.

14 Date and time of the next meeting

The Clerk noted that the next ordinary meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 13 June 2018 but this might change as a result of the timing of the SLT/Governors Conference.