

CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE

BOARD OF GOVERNORS – FINANCE AND PREMISES COMMITTEE

The Committee met at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 12 June 2019 in the Conference Room at the College.

Members present:

Richard Ainscough, Chair (F)
Nigel James.
Andrew Wygladala (F)

Officers in attendance:

Bob Deed, Clerk
Claire Riding, College Accountant
Katie O'Reilly, VP – Finance & Resources

MINUTES

1 Opening prayer

The meeting commenced with a prayer.

2 Welcome, introductions and apologies

Apologies were received from Nick Burnham, Len Hampson, Bill Noblett and Helen Seechurn.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest. Nigel James noted his register of interests entry disclosing his employment with Tribal which sold software to colleges and offered packages similar to Cedar.

4 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of Finance and Premises Committee held on Wednesday 6 March 2019 were accepted as a correct record.

5 Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

6 Risk register: termly update

The Vice Principal introduced the risk register and noted there were no significant changes.

The Vice Principal noted that the SLT were to have a risk management workshop to refresh the Risk Register. She expected that this would result in new risks such as around the Maths School.

7 Health & safety report

The Vice Principal introduced the Health & Safety Report. She updated the Committee on the policy now having been signed by the Principal.

The Chair noted the reduced number of accidents at the College. The Vice Principal noted that there was no pattern and that the numbers could be highly variable.

The Chair asked about non-compliance rates for training. The Vice Principal said that a reminder was being issued imminently.

The Chair noted incidents of self-harm. The Vice Principal said that this was part of the national issue of mental health among young people. She noted that the College had recently appointed another counsellor who was full-time with another staff-member providing counselling on a sessional basis. Currently there was no issue with waiting times.

A Committee member asked about how they students could refer themselves. The Vice Principal noted that there were various channels.

9 College Finance Report for April 2019

The College Accountant noted that the College was forecasting a surplus of £304k which was a decrease of £47k since February. This arose from an additional £131k of non-pay cost which was offset by both increased income and further reductions to staffing costs.

The College Accountant noted that the balance sheet remains strong with a cash balance of £3.5m and £0.5m in short term investments. This was £800k higher than April 2018. The year-end balance sheet was forecast to show £3.2m of cash plus £1m in investments. The investment were split between £500k in Nationwide at 0.9% interest and with 95 days' notice and then £250k each with Lloyds and Bank of Scotland at 0.8% interest and with 32 days' notice.

The Committee noted that the College continued to generate significant cash through its operations.

The College Accountant updated the Committee on Newman Business Limited which was forecasting a surplus of £105k - £13k up on January's forecast. This reflected both new sales and additional modules and upgrades for existing customers. The surplus would be Gift Aided to the College after the meeting of the NBL board at its July meeting. The company's balance sheet was healthy with a bank balance of £112k.

10 Draft Budget and Financial Plan

The Chair noted the Vice Principal and the Finance Team's work on the Draft Budget and Financial Plan.

The Vice Principal noted the cost pressures on the College in the face of the flat National Funding Rate. She highlighted the key funding assumptions including 75% funding of the Teachers' Pension Scheme contribution increase in 2020/21.

The Vice Principal drew the Committee's attention to the scenarios shown in the paper with the base line being relatively pessimistic about funding. The Committee noted the likelihood of the Spending Review being delayed until next year.

The Vice Principal noted that the budget and forecast did not include the College's role as lead in the Abacus North West Maths Hub. The value were currently uncertain, as were the financial arrangements, but this was likely to be positive for the College.

The Vice Principal reminded the Committee that the budget and forecast assumed the possible T Levels Capital funding and related project but included no other major capital projects.

The Committee resolved to recommend the draft budget and Financial Plan, including the financial objectives, to the Governing Body for approval.

11 Policy review:

The Clerk as Vice Principal introduced the paper. He noted that it was primarily affecting Higher Education students at the College. He said that there were no significant changes.

The Committee resolved to recommend the draft Fees Framework to the Governing Body for approval.

The Clerk as Vice Principal outlined the background to the Major Incident paper with the College adopting a Business Continuity and Recovery Policy and Plan in 2014 and then accumulating other policies and procedures. He noted the discussion about "lock-down" as well as the recent Project ARGUS training by regional Counter Terrorism Advisers. He said that SLT members had pulled together and refreshed the various documents into a single Policy and Plan.

He said that the main change was the Stay Safe guidance which advises staff what to do in the event of a significant threat. It encourages staff members to secure rooms and buildings with staff using their initiative rather than relying on central direction. This reflects the Project ARGUS training.

The Chair asked for clarity about:

- the handling of incoming calls;
- the role of the Deputy Principal deputising for the Principal;
- the content of any non-standard communication about closure; and
- the responsibilities for dealing with bomb threats

The Clerk as Vice Principal suggested that these changes should be progressed so the document could be adopted.

The Committee resolved to recommend the draft Major Incident policy to the Governing Body for approval subject to the clarifications suggested.

The Clerk as Vice Principal explained the background to the draft Document Retention Schedule. He said that this was part of the College's approach to GDPR and that it had proven particularly difficult.

The Committee resolved to recommend the draft Document Retention Schedule to the Governing Body for approval subject to necessary amendments.

12 Committee self-assessment including review of terms of reference

The Clerk said that the committee self-assessment fed into the College governance self-assessment. He put it in the context of the mapping exercise undertaken by the Clerk in the spring showing the Committee's activities against its existing terms of reference.

The Vice Principal highlighted the changes against at the last meeting such as the annual Networks and Premises reports.

The Committee resolved to recommend the revised Committee name and terms of reference to Governing Body.

The Committee endorsed the Chair's suggestion that the table in the mapping document in the paper be brought back to the next Committee meeting with columns added for:

- Evidence of activities.
- Changes being introduced with timescales.

13 Determination of any items to be treated as Confidential

The property strategy update was deemed to be confidential.

14 Date and time of the next meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Committee is provisionally scheduled for 20 November 2019.

The additional meeting of the Committee is planned for 21 June 2019.