

MOULTON COLLEGE FEC

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting Held on Thursday 29th January 2009

Part 1

Present: Mr C Alderson-Smith (in the Chair), Mr C Barney, Mrs C Boardman,
Mr J Gaggini, Mr P Heygate, Mr C Moody, Mr R Thompson

In Attendance: Mr G Davies. Mr J Mair, Mr M Wilkinson

The Chairman welcomed Robin Thompson to his first meeting of the Committee.

09/1 Apologies for absence (agenda item 1)

No apologies were received.

09/2 Declarations of interest (agenda item 2)

Mrs Boardman declared an interest in any items concerning Daventry District Council and Northamptonshire County Council. Mr Heygate declared an interest as a supplier to the College and in the establishment of a northern ring road.

09/3 Minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2008 (agenda item 3, paper A)

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record.

09/4 Matters Arising (agenda item 4)

There were no matters arising.

09/5 New Developments – Progress Report (agenda item 5)

a) LRC Extension (paper B)

The financial report was discussed. The project was still reported to be on schedule. Deejak were willing to meet the extra costs associated with breaking through into the existing LRC at Easter, so it had been agreed to proceed with this. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/6 Capital Development Programme (agenda item 6)

a) Planning Applications

The application for outline planning permission had been refused under delegated powers on 19th December. An application for full planning permission for 2 staff houses at Lodge Farm and an extension to the loop road would go to committee in February or March. . It was likely that a meeting with consultants later in the day would recommend submitting an appeal against the rejection, in addition to a new application with additional detail. The Chairman of the Planning Committee had

provided an assurance that this resubmission would be determined by committee not by delegated powers. Detailed designs and full planning applications for some buildings on the critical path would be progressed providing planning permission for the houses is received. Following discussion, *this course of action was supported.*

b) LSC Capital Support Application

The LSC National Council had delayed making a decision on all outstanding projects (both AiPs and AiDs) until their next meeting on 4th March. The College's Application in Principle (AIP) was currently first in the queue for consideration but there was no guarantee that this would still be the case once priorities had been revisited. The College had LSC approval for 50% re-imburement of the fees for preparation of the AIP, and had put on hold any further work except in relation to the staff houses and associated road diversion. The risk associated with progressing the other projects would be carefully assessed. Access to the Main Site needed attention, particularly the further separation of vehicles and pedestrians. It was proposed to proceed with detailed designs for the Student Social Centre and submit planning applications for this and an access road as soon as planning permission has been secured for the staff houses. The risks associated with progressing development of the Sports Therapy Centre were considered to be too high at present. The College had submitted a bid for funding to NEL and, if successful, this would help to fund the Sports Therapy Centre development costs from 1st April 2009. Following discussion, *these proposals were approved.*

c) New road at Lodge Farm (paper C)

The post tender report was discussed. Following discussion, *it was agreed to award the contract to Phoenix Paving at a cost of £41,531.88 excluding VAT plus an additional £28,312.84 excluding VAT to kerb and resurface the existing road, the award of contract being subject to full planning permission being obtained.*

d) Erection of 2 farm cottages at Lodge Farm (paper D)

The post-tender report was discussed. Following discussion, *it was agreed to award the contract to Deejak Builders Ltd at a cost of £285,220.89, subject to planning permission being obtained, and to Deejak's request for tender clarifications being successfully resolved.*

Gerald Davies left the meeting.

09/7 Unity School/Academy (agenda item 7)

Current progress with the project was outlined and discussed. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/8 Management Accounts (agenda item 8)

a) November 2008 (paper E)

The accounts were discussed. The surplus to date was £117,430 ahead of budget . The College was in financial category B and rated Outstanding under the

Framework for Excellence. Following discussion, *the accounts were approved.*

b) December 2008 (paper F)

The accounts were discussed. The surplus to date was £51,711 ahead of budget. The College was in financial category B and rated Outstanding under the Framework for Excellence. The economic downturn was discussed. Garden Centre income was being helped by the Pet and Florist shops. Employer Responsive training was also potentially vulnerable to the recession. It was not currently a large part of the budget but was projected to grow in future years. Following discussion, *the accounts were approved.*

09/9 Reconciliation of Statutory and Management Accounts 2007-8 (agenda item 9, paper G)

The reconciliation was discussed *and noted.*

09/10 Student Common Room/Social Club Quarterly Accounts (agenda item 10, paper H)

The accounts were discussed. Income on both accounts was less than the previous year although they were still expected to leave an annual surplus. Fewer students were attending the social events and this reinforced the need to improve the facilities. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/11 Treasury Management Report (agenda item 11, paper I)

The autumn term report was discussed. Borrowings had been kept to a minimum during the period. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

08/19 Budgeting Schedule 2008-9 (agenda item 12, paper J)

The schedule was discussed *and approved.*

08/20 Use of consultants 2007-8 (agenda item 13, paper K)

The report was discussed *and noted.*

09/12 Operating Statement 2008-9 (agenda item 14, paper L)

The report was tabled. It would be discussed in detail at next month's meeting.

09/13 ILR Update 2008-9 (agenda item 15, paper M)

The current position was outlined and discussed. The categories of LSC funding were different to last year. The College had enough students on roll to meet the cash targets by the end of the year. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/14 Recruitment 2009-10 (agenda item 16, paper N)

There had been 742 full-time applications to date compared to 839 at the equivalent time last year and 181 acceptances compared to 146 last year. Landbased Faculty applications were higher but Construction was lower, although all the available funded places should be filled. Sport applications were slightly lower but the Academy trials had not yet been held. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/15 Higher Education Fee Refunds (agenda item 17, paper O)

The recommendation from SMT to approve the same policy as the University was *approved.*

09/16 Study Tour Requests (agenda item 18)

a) BSc Applied Animal Science (paper P)

The trip to South Lakes Wild Animal Park *was approved.*

b) Dressage Academy (paper Pi)

The trip to Spain by members of the Academy *was approved.*

c) Trip to South Africa

The trip was due to go ahead in March. Financing of the trip was discussed. Costings would be checked by Finance staff in future. Following discussion, *it was agreed to underwrite the trip if necessary.*

09/17 North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (agenda item 19, paper Q)

The timetable for review was discussed. Following discussion, *it was agreed not to participate in the early stages of the review.*

09/18 CULTIVA (agenda item 20)

A report was given on the Board meeting held in December. There had been some changes of Directors in the other colleges. The Executive Director, Alastair Taylor, had resigned to take up a post at Hartpury College. He would not be replaced for the time being. Each college would take responsibility for different parts of the work and the position would be reviewed in 12 months time. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/19 Governor Development Day (agenda item 21)

The Principals of Reaseheath and Hartpury Colleges had agreed to host visits on March 12th and 13th respectively. A visit to CAFRE would be considered for 2010. Some members of SMT would also accompany the tour. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/20 Date of next meeting (agenda item 22)

Thursday 19th February 2009 at 9.30am in the Principal's Office. Mr Barney presented his apologies for absence.

09/21 Any other business (agenda item 21)

a) Employer Engagement Strategy (paper R)

The Assistant Principal Commercial Training and Business Development had produced this strategy, which drew together the college's outward facing activity. The paper would be discussed in detail next month.

b) Ofsted

Ofsted had conducted a best practice visit the previous day to look at stakeholder engagement in the development process. The draft letter contained many examples of good practice and 2 recommendations for development . The final letter would be placed on the Ofsted website. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

09/8c) Daventry Skills Academy

The lease on the High March Centre would expire in July. The site was not particularly satisfactory. Alternative proposals were discussed *and approved in principle.*

Part 1 of the meeting concluded. Jamie Mair left the meeting