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Borders College

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Meeting at 17:30 Thursday 10 June 2021

MS Teams

Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility and Date	Action Status
24/21	Annual Budget 20/21 – review of Regional Board paper to be completed to ensure alignment with F&GP discussion. Appendix 2 – unlabelled green segment to be identified.	VP Finance & Corporate Services	Complete This section is College Management
25/21	Business Review - targets to be set on payment time for creditors once there was a better understanding on the barriers. The inclusion of capital spend for future reports would be considered.	VP Finance & Corporate Services VP Finance & Corporate Services	For new financial year For new financial year
27/21	Strategic Risk Register - new format to be considered by the Audit and Curriculum & Quality Committees. Meetings to be arranged with a worked example for each. Engagement with the Regional Board would require further discussion. A typo on page 6 was noted.	Board Secretary & VP Finance & Corporate Services	All completed with new risk register in place.

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Minutes

ITEM	MINUTE
Present In Attendance	Elaine Acaster (Chair) Angela Cox (Principal) Jess McBeath Lynn Mirley Liz Parkes David Peace Debbie Kerr (Head of HR & Development) Hazel Robertson (Vice Principal – Finance & Corporate Services) Ingrid Earp (Regional Board Secretary) Lorraine Sulo (Minutes)
17/21	<u>Chair's Welcome</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members agreed to Paper F being brought forward to the start of the meeting.
18/21	<u>Declaration of Conflict of Interest</u> No declarations were raised.
19/21	<u>Register of Members Interest</u> Members were reminded to advise the Board Secretary of any changes.
20/21	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received from S Prentice, BCSA.
21/21	<u>Minutes of Meetings held on 15 February 2021 – Paper A</u> The previous minute was approved as an accurate record.
22/21 08/21	<u>Matters Arising</u> The format of DEBI reports was under discussion and would be presented at the September 2021 meeting. This was following a request for success rates of tender bids to be included within future reports. All other actions had been completed with no further matters arising.

<p>28/21</p>	<p><u>HR Report – Great Places to Work Survey Results – Paper F</u></p> <p>The Head of HR and Development provided an overview of the results from the Great Places to Work employee engagement survey. The survey received 172 responses from 296 invites sent. Points highlighted included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average score for all statements – 73%; • Accreditation also received for best workplaces for women which would be published in the July edition of Elle magazine; • Meetings to review data had been held with Department Managers who would be holding discussions with their staff. Departments would be concentrating on 2-3 key actions which would be monitored by SLT; • Focus groups would take place in order to implement action plans on areas for improvement; and • Two areas for initial focus would be Business and Creative Industries. <p>Members agreed that this was a fantastic result for the College and looked forward to receiving an update on progress.</p>
<p>23/21</p>	<p><u>Ratification of Mid-year Financial Forecast Return</u></p> <p>The VP Finance and Corporate Services advised that it had been necessary to seek email approval from members for the Mid-year Financial Forecast Return at the end of March 2021 in order to meet SFC deadlines. All members had confirmed their approval by return. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key headline forecast of £51k surplus compared to FFR projected surplus of £67k; • Savings plan for the year of £772k had been achieved; and • A very good position given complexities of COVID-19. <p>Following a discussion, members ratified their approval of the Mid-year Financial Forecast Return.</p>
<p>24/21</p>	<p><u>Annual Budget 21/22</u></p> <p>The current position was outlined by the VP Finance and Corporate Services who advised that the current year guidance for the FFR had not yet been received, however, this was due imminently. This was a challenging position as detailed budgets were required to be set by cost centre prior to the commencement of the new financial year. The budget presented was based on previous assumptions which may require to be adjusted following FFR guidance.</p> <p>Members discussed the paper with the following points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive preparation work had been completed by the Assistant Principal of Finance and the Finance Business Partner to prepare the draft budget with a comprehensive budget tool created; • Student funding budget was still to be included at £2.2million – up 1.6% since last year; • Funding position – 8% increase. With exclusion of earmarked funding this was a 2.4% increase which largely reflected cost of living;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceeds from Melrose Road Sale – positive discussions with SFC to retain capital receipt had been held with proposals for digital and sustainability/net zero being brought together. Funds would require to be spent by 31 March 2022; • Rise in staff costs – job evaluation process was still to be finalised so this continued to be accrued. Assumptions were based on 6% but could be 8-10%; • Operating finances – significant increase in ISLT budget due to implementation of Digital Transformation Programme and move to a Cloud based solution, Canvas and Prosolution, with additional costs covered by a reduction in staff costs; • FAs – small risk regarding funding which is ring-fenced, but there was confidence in the overall income generation of DEBI; • Catering Contract – loss of income was due to low footfall and costs which were being incurred through the redeployment of staff for hygiene and steward roles, which would require further consideration by Campus Management Committee; • The expected contribution of £7k for the BCSA had been honoured; • Income – SDS/Education contracts had increased with staffing for contracts absorbed within costs of teaching; • Achievement of £177k cost reduction is assumed with a £110k surplus; and • Appendix 2 – green segment which was not identified would be confirmed. <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: VP F&CS</p> <p>The Principal clarified that irrespective of FFR guidance the funding which had been allocated to the College for 21/22 would remain. Reassurance on the budget which was presented was also provided by the Principal.</p> <p>Following a substantive discussion, members recommended the paper for submission to the Regional Board. A review of the paper which had already been issued to the Regional Board would be completed to ensure alignment with points raised.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: VP F&CS</p>
<p>25/21</p>	<p><u>Business Review</u></p> <p>An overview of the paper was provided by the VP Finance and Corporate Services with the following key points highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall surplus position of £371,963 which was higher than forecasted due to phasing of expenditure for last quarter; • Savings fully achieved and strong cash position; • MYR forecast of £51k surplus; and • Student debt had been significantly reduced. <p>Concerns regarding the payment time of creditors were raised by members. This had been an ongoing issue for some time and given the current pandemic climate there were concerns regarding the impact this could be having on businesses. VP Finance and Corporate Services acknowledged that there were issues with meeting the payment terms, but was confident that the team were prioritising payments as necessary. It was agreed that targets would be set but prior to this a deeper understanding on the reasons for delays would be required.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: VP F&CS</p>

	<p>Unspent student funding had been returned to the SFC which was a similar position to other colleges. This was due to a number of students not being on campus and therefore there was a significant reduction in travel and childcare requirements. Additional allocations for hardship and COVID related issues which could be more flexibly used had been received.</p> <p>The inclusion of capital spend for future reports would be considered. ACTION: VP F&CS</p> <p>Members noted the current financial position.</p>
26/21	<p><u>Asset Management Strategy Update – Paper D</u></p> <p>Members received an update against the priority actions by the VP Finance and Corporate Services with the following points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Digital Transformation Programme continued very well and to plan, however, there had been a delay in Datavita mobilisation in relation to the move to Cloud infrastructure. This could require a change in the timeline but this would not cause a problem with the overall programme; • A three year capital plan was being developed with three themes: living lab, immersive learning spaces and flipping the campus; • Capital works at Newtown St Boswells were complete but had not yet been signed off by the Planning Department due to COVID19. Members raised concerns regarding the continued delay which meant occupation could not take place; • Real-time data analytics tool dashboard would be implemented initially for the curriculum. Requirements for Board Members would have been identified and can be implemented in ProSolution; and • The College’s Projects’ Board meets on a monthly basis to monitor progress on all projects. Permanent programme management roles were currently being recruited. <p>Members noted the report and the large volume of work which was underway.</p>
27/21	<p><u>Strategic Risk Register</u></p> <p>A new balanced scorecard format had been developed by the VP Finance and Corporate Services which would allow greater alignment to committees and enable a more focussed scrutiny. The new format still required some further work and input from members.</p> <p>Following a lengthy discussion and positive feedback from members, it was agreed that the new format should also be considered by the Audit and Curriculum & Quality Committees. Meetings to discuss the single agenda item would be arranged for both Committees. It was agreed that a worked example for each committee would be of benefit to members for their discussions. Engagement with the Regional Board would require further discussion. A typo on page 6 was noted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: VP F&CS & BOARD SECRETARY</p>

29/21	<p><u>Equality, Diversity & Innovation (Standing item)</u></p> <p>No items were raised.</p>
30/21	<p><u>Papers for Publication (Standing item)</u></p> <p>All papers could be published except for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper F HR Report - Only the cover paper would be published and • Paper E Strategic Risk Register - would not be published.
31/21	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>No items were raised.</p>
32/21	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The next F&GP Committee meeting would take place on Thursday 23 September 2021 at 17:30.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note – September meeting was rescheduled to 7 October 2021 at 17:30.</i></p>

Signed.....

Chair

Signed.....

Board Secretary