

Board of Management Finance and General Purposes Committee

Minute of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Board of Management of Dumfries and Galloway College, held at 12noon on Tuesday 22 September 2020 via Microsoft Teams

Present: Hugh Carr (Chair) Sue Livermore
Delia Holland John Henderson
Ann Hill

In attendance: Steve Uphill - Vice Principal, Finance and Commercial Services
Andrew Glen, Vice Principal, Corporate Services and Strategic Planning
Karen Hunter, Head of Finance

Minute Taker: Alex Elkins - Executive Assistant

Apologies: Joanna Campbell - Principal
Lorraine Grierson – Secretary to the Board,
Penny Davis – Interim Secretary to the Board
Karen McGahan – Board Member

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting in particular Steve Uphill, Interim Vice Principal Finance and Commercial Services.

Apologies had been received from Joanna Campbell, Lorraine Grierson, Karen McGahan and Penny Davis. The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate.

2 Declaration of Interest

Members agreed to indicate declarations of interest as appropriate throughout the meeting.

3 Minute of Meeting of 16 June 2020

The Minute of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 16 June 2020 was approved with the following two amendments. ...

- Page 4 – Date of next meeting change from 2021 to 2020.

ACTION: - The Executive Assistant would amend the minute.

4 Matters Arising not included on the agenda

No matters were raised.

5 Strategic Risk Register

The Vice Principal, Strategic Planning and Corporate Services outlined the purpose of the Risk Register with particular risks relevant to the Finance and General Purposes Committee being discussed.

Item 2.5 *Failure to achieve credit (activity)* - The potential to achieve the College's credit target due to factors relating to COVID-19 was discussed.

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Item 3.7 - *Breach of ICT/Cyber security* - The risk was discussed, and the Vice Principal, Strategic Planning and Corporate Services informed members of the recent installation of a new fire wall and highlighted other measures in place for the College's ICT security. The issue of asset tracking of ICT equipment was raised and the arrangements for asset tagging of College equipment was explained.

Decision: - The Finance & General Purposes Committee discussed and approved the Strategic Risk Register, with the following amendments which would be recommended to the Board: -

- Item 2.5 - *Failure to achieve credit (activity) target* – Increase the risk from green to Amber - increase the score to level 5 and 3.

Action: - The Secretary to the Board, would update the Risk Register.

6 Management Accounts Year 19/20

The Vice Principal, Finance and Commercial Services introduced the report which had been provided by the Head of Finance. The report detailed the final out-turn for session 2019/20 and would be subject to audit. The committee were given an update ...

A question was raised relating to the Scottish Funding Council's definition of a 'going concern'. The committee were advised that there had been no national guidance on the definition. The Vice Principal Finance and Commercial Services commented that national guidance would be expected soon.

Further clarification around the SoSEP accounts and Student Support costs was requested.

Decision: - It was agreed that a further detailed statement for the SoSEP accounts and Student Support costs would be circulated to committee members. The committee noted the accounts.

ACTION: -

- The Head of Finance would provide a summary for both SoSEP and Student Support costs for circulation to members.
- Departmental breakdown of staff costs would be shown in the accounts for session 20/21.

7 Annual Debt Report

The Head of Finance spoke to the Annual Debt Report explaining that the report would be presented to the committee on an annual basis.....

The Committee welcomed the report ... and congratulated the Finance Department on their work. The committee noted the report.

8 Travel & Expenses Report

The Head of Finance provided an update on the report which outlined detailed changes to the travel policy. The policy now included reference to Board members, HMRC rates and guidelines and car passengers.

A discussion around the submission of travelling expenses took place and The Chair commented on the authorisation process of Board members expenses and confirmed that no expenses had been requested in the previous 3 months.

It was commented that the policy offered clear guidance for the process of claiming expenses for staff and would give confidence to the committee. The committee was reassured that further management and breaking down of the budget would take place.

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The committee agreed that expenses must be claimed timeously and would be submitted within a 3-month period in line with the policy.

Decision: - The Vice Principal, Strategic Planning and Corporate Services would seek clarification and advice around governance from the Secretary to the Board on the chain of authorisation for Board member expenses. The committee approved the policy.

ACTION: –

The Secretary to the Board would provide an update on expenses to the committee at the next meeting.

9 Scheme of Delegation

The Vice Principal, Finance and Commercial Services spoke to the report which proposed changes to the College's existing Scheme of Delegation. The new proposed thresholds would assist in better control of budget spends and accountability with the introduction of a dual signature process. The Committee were asked to consider revising the current requirement in the Financial Regulations for all proposed write-off of debts to be authorised by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

It was confirmed that the scheme would apply to non-paying expenditure only and budget allocation had been based on the approved budget of 2020/21. A review of the process would take place at Senior Leadership Team and Executive Leadership Team level.

The committee approved the changes and would recommend them to the Board.

10 Health & Safety and IT/IS Update

The Vice Principal, Strategic Planning and Corporate Services provided a verbal update to members, highlighting key points: -

- The installation of a new WiFi system and improved firewall had been completed, providing increased monitoring and improved secure access for students and staff working remotely.
- The ICT Team had worked on providing devices for students and staff, increasing academic capabilities and 150 devices had been distributed.
- The College held a Virtual Open Week, had conducted online inductions and online enrolments and provided video walkthroughs for students and staff.
- The collation of baseline data for the Phase 2 Transformation Plan had been developed.
- A new dashboard to monitor KPIs was in development.

The committee were updated on various estates works which had included roof repairs, upgrades to the heating and fabric improvements to Stranraer Campus, the new reception at Dumfries campus had been completed. The Library at Dumfries campus had been re-located to level 1 and the new study zone would be completed at the end of October.

Works relating to COVID-19 had been carried out as government guidance had been issued and all staff risk assessments had been completed. A thermal imaging camera had been installed as well as signage and sanitising stations provided. Staff and student safety remained a priority for the College.

It was reported that the Health and Safety Committee had met 4 times since March, 12 incidents had been reported to the Health and Safety executive, 7 involving students, 5 involving staff and 1 involving a contractor.

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The Committee commended the work undertaken by staff to support the COVID-19 effort and had observed that the College had been well organised and prepared.

Decision: - The committee agreed to convey thanks to all staff for the work undertaken.

A concern was raised in connection with access permissions to AdminControl. The Vice Principal, Strategic Planning and Corporate Services advised the committee that the Executive Assistant had begun an audit of access permissions to AdminControl.

ACTION: –

- AG will review access permissions with DM following the completed audit of AdminControl.
- Requests for additional training and support for AdminControl for Board members would be provided as needed and communicated to AG via the PA to the Principal and executive Assistant.

11 Any Other Business

The Board member appraisals were discussed. The Chair confirmed that a round of appraisals would take place in Autumn, the Vice Chair confirmed that appraisals for session 2019/20 had not been completed and it was unclear if documentation relating to the appraisal process existed. It was agreed that a search for any documents relating to appraisals would be conducted.

ACTION: –

The Chair will request that the Secretary to the Board conduct a search for appraisal documents and report back to the committee.

11 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The date and time of the next Finance and General Purposes Committee is Tuesday 17 Nov 2020, at 12noon.