

Plumpton College

**Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes meeting
held on Tuesday 2 March 2010**

- Present: Mike Atkinson - Governor (Chairman)
 Judy Llewellyn-Burke - Governor (Vice Chairman)
 Julia Hadden - Governor
 Des Lambert - Principal/Governor
 Richard Partridge - Governor
 David Rafferty - HE Student Governor
 Jeff Trunkfield - Governor
- In attendance: Jenny Brooker - Clerk to the Corporation
 Geoff Gregory - Deputy Principal (Resources)
 Val Wilkinson - Director of Finance
- Apologies: Jeremy Courtney - Governor
 John Evans - Governor

Meeting commenced: 4.10pm

Minute No.		Action by whom	Action by when
FGP/10/01	Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 27 th November 2009 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.		
FGP/10/02	Matters Arising FGP/09/43: Additional funding to cover the 16-18 ALS deficit should be a pre-condition for the College contributing actively to the raising of the 'in education' age. Discretionary learner support funding for the 2010-11 academic year had not been allocated. FGP/09/43: Geoff Russell had been appointed Chief Executive of the Skills Funding Agency. There was a possibility that the level of delegated authority to colleges for capital expenditure could increase to £3m. The College had not yet received assurance that the capital grant from the LSC would be paid on schedule, but the likelihood of a delay to the payment was thought to be small. FGP/09/46: The UoB allocation of student numbers to the College for 2010/11 was lower than the actual for 2009/10, and institutions could now be penalised for over-recruitment of students with eligibility for student loans. The Corporation strategy, as discussed at the strategic workshop, was continued HE growth. Agreed (a) HE Students continue to be recruited above the number allocated to the College with a maximum cap on numbers equating to £200k in penalties for over recruitment. (b) The UoB be lobbied to increase the College's allocation of	DPL/DTS	

	<p>student numbers.</p> <p>(Mr Partridge arrived at the meeting at this point).</p> <p>FGP/09/47: The Chairman and Ms Wilkinson would draft a letter to the LGPCS pension fund actuary regarding longevity assumptions.</p> <p>FGP/09/48: The Chairman had not received a response from ESCC to a letter he had sent advising of the planned investment in the East of the County by the College.</p> <p>FGP/09/49: The Annual Review had been published.</p> <p>Agreed: Governors to be provided with a copy of the Annual Review and the Chairman to be provided with a list of who the document had been circulated to.</p> <p>FGP/09/51: Consideration would be given to increasing the level of employer and public liability insurance. The annual risk assessment of the farm had not identified any significant issues.</p> <p>FGP/09/52: Academic SARs should be developed to include wider business aspects and the Chairman would provide proposals on the future content of non academic SARs.</p>	<p>DPL</p> <p>MA/VW</p> <p>JKB</p> <p>GJG</p> <p>MA</p>	<p>01.05.10</p> <p>30.03.10</p> <p>30.06.10</p> <p>01.05.10</p>
FGP/10/03	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>Presenting her report of the financial situation as at 31 January 2010, Ms Wilkinson advised that the projection for the year was a surplus of £331k. There had been some improvement in income generation and a reduction in miscellaneous non pay costs but Work based learning and Train to Gain were not performing as well as forecast and was £106k below budget.</p> <p>The £4.1m loan for phase two of the West Wing would be reduced to £3.85m by the end of the current finance year as required under the loan agreement. It had been previously agreed that the remainder of the loan would be repaid as quickly as possible but further consideration was needed to the timing of loan repayments as the interest rate on the loan was very low at 1.11% and it may therefore be in the financial interest of the College to delay the full repayment.</p> <p>There were an increasing number of students requiring financial support with £43k of support provided so far this year against the capped budget of £50k. The level of debtors was expected to significantly improve by the end of the year with HE and FE fees due to be paid to the College.</p> <p>The cash flow forecast included LSC grant, maintenance costs and staff pay. It also included the allocation of capital spend on the farm, Green Oak and Flimwell Workshops.</p>		

	<p>Agreed:</p> <p>(a) The finance report to 31 January 2010 to be noted.</p> <p>(b) The limit on discretionary financial support for students delegated to the Principal be increased to £100k per annum.</p> <p>(c) The Chairman, Mrs Llewellyn-Burke and Ms Wilkinson to meet to discuss the College loan arrangements.</p>	VW MA/JB/VW	30.04.10
FGP/10/04	<p>Finance Manual</p> <p>Three revised sections of the finance manual had been drafted and were scheduled to be considered by the Audit Committee.</p> <p>Agreed: If the Audit Committee and Director of Finance are in agreement with the proposed revised sections of the finance manual, the sections be submitted to the Corporation for approval at its meeting on 30 March 2010.</p>	VW/JKB	30.03.10
FGP/10/05	<p>Annual Report on Procurement</p> <p>Mr Gregory presented two papers regarding procurement – progress against strategic targets and a review of the procurement of services and goods.</p> <p>External influences impacting on the cost of services meant it was not always possible to reduce costs. The NFU had signed up to a framework agreement for insurance services which it was hoped would keep premiums competitive.</p> <p>Savings had been achieved in some areas including examination fees and telecommunications. Difficulty in reducing gas and electricity costs was partly attributed to additional buildings on site. Electricity was cheaper for residential accommodation and residential blocks had therefore been sub metered, achieving savings.</p> <p>(Mr Rafferty left the meeting at this point).</p> <p>Procurement and efficiency savings of 2.5% a year was a realistic target but it was difficult to distinguish between procurement and efficiency savings.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>(a) A 2.5% savings target per annum be set for procurement and efficiency savings.</p> <p>(b) Procurement savings be investigated at local, regional and national level, and benchmarking data be investigated, e.g. with Landex and FE Sussex.</p>	GJG	
FGP/10/06	<p>Marketing Plan</p> <p>The Principal provided a summary of current and planned marketing activities. The Principal had met with Mrs Llewellyn-Burke to discuss the marketing strategy. Although recruiting from</p>		

	<p>such a large geographical area was resource intensive, it resulted in student recruitment from approximately 70 Local Educational Authorities.</p> <p>Courses were advertised through sector specific journals and events as a means to promote specific curriculum areas. Forestry was identified as an area with scope for additional student numbers partly due to the development of Flimwell.</p> <p>Innovative marketing methods were being developed included a site on 'Twitter' and a website for business training. The importance of maintaining the interest of younger students in the College was identified such as sending regular correspondence to students that had attended taster courses at the College.</p> <p>The College was not limited in the number of non EU HE students it could recruit but overseas marketing would need to be focused on one or two countries, and in one or two curriculum areas, due to the resource implications of overseas promotion.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Focus should be placed on marketing forestry courses. (b) The College should continue its efforts to obtain membership of partnership board in West Sussex Area B and attendance at school careers events in the County. (c) The strategic and annual operating marketing targets to be updated and submitted to the Corporation for approval. 	<p>DPL</p> <p>DPL/DTS</p> <p>DPL/MA</p>	<p>30.03.10</p>
<p>FGP/10/07</p>	<p>Minutes and Recommendations of Working Groups</p> <p>The committee was recommended to re-name each working group a Sub Committee due to the level of delegation provided to them. Revised terms of reference for the Buildings and Farm Sub Committee and Environmental Sub Committee were considered.</p> <p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The proposed terms of reference for the Buildings and Farm Sub Committee and Environmental Sub Committee be approved. (b) The Buildings, Environmental and Residential Groups be re-named Sub Committees and the terms of reference of each group be altered accordingly. <p>Buildings and Farm Sub Committee</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2009 were noted and the Chairman reported on the discussions of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 23 February 2010. The West Wing and workshops were completed. The Flimwell Workshops were near completion and the plans and business case for the phased development of the dairy had been approved.</p> <p>[An item was taken in confidential discussion at this point – see Ref FGP/10/10].</p> <p>The Sub Committee recommended the expansion of the HE</p>	<p>JKB</p> <p>JKB</p>	<p>05.03.10</p> <p>05.03.10</p>

	<p>capital infrastructure during 2010 at a cost of £300k (with £200k of this cost being met by the UoB) and the development of Green Oak.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Buildings and Farm Sub Committee be delegated to approve plans for the development of Green Oak up to a maximum of £400k. (b) The development of HE facilities be taken forward with £100k allocated to the project within the current financial year and £200k funded by the UoB subject to the approval of the business case by the Buildings & Farm Sub Committee. <p>Environmental Sub Committee At its last meeting held on 9th December 2009, the Sub Committee had considered opportunities for joint working with the UoB on environmental projects, environmental legislation and targets. The group had also reviewed the College environmental policy.</p> <p>Residential Services Sub Committee At its last meeting held on 19th January 2010, the Sub Committee had considered a report on the inspection of residential provision, proposed changes to the safeguarding policy and residential, catering and transport targets. The group had been unable to agree long term income targets for residential and catering provision at this stage, but this would be a priority item on its following agendas. It was identified that targets were needed in these areas and would be annually reviewed.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Central estimate strategic targets to be established for residential, catering and transport for inclusion in the strategic plan. (b) Consideration to be given to the Summer letting of College facilities at its Outstations. 	<p>JKB/MA</p> <p>VW/DPL</p> <p>MA/DPL 24.03.10</p> <p>DPL 24.03.10</p>	
<p>FGP/10/08</p>	<p>Annual Report on Environmental Issues</p> <p>Issues that the Environmental Sub Committee had considered since its establishment included the environmental strategic target, appropriate methods of energy measurement and the development of alternative energy sources. Future work that was planned included engaging students in environmental initiatives.</p> <p>The group recommended that the current strategic target of a 2% reduction in energy consumption per annum remain in place until baseline data was established but that new environmental operating targets were adopted as set out in the report. Doubts were expressed about targets geared to Guided Learning Hours.</p> <p>The environmental policy had been revised including the addition of details on the scope and purpose of the policy, a section on key actions regarding water use and a section on the monitoring and audit of the policy.</p>		

	<p>Agreed:</p> <p>(a) The Annual Report on Environmental issues be noted and the proposed strategic target and annual operating targets be submitted to the Corporation for consideration as part of the strategic plan.</p> <p>(b) The revised environmental policy be approved.</p>	MA/JKB	24.03.10
FGP/10/09	<p>Sickness Management Policy and Recruitment and Selection Policy</p> <p>The Committee considered revised policies on Sickness Management and Recruitment and Selection.</p> <p>The College had been successful in its application for a licence to sponsor overseas staff and students under the UKBA Sponsor Licence Scheme. Both policies had been updated in the light of requirements under the scheme and a procedure had also been developed for staff which outlined checks that the College had to conduct before recruiting non EU staff and students.</p> <p>The recruitment and selection policy had also been revised in response to safeguarding issues identified in the recent Osted inspection of residential provision.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>(a) The Recruitment and Selection Policy be approved subject to addition of mention to an annual report to F&GP Committee on staff data.</p> <p>(b) The Sickness Management Policy be approved but further reviewed and brought back to the committee for consideration including the addition of details of the new 'Fit to Work' scheme.</p>	JKB JKB	11.05.10 11.05.10
FGP/10/10	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 11 May 2010 at 5.00pm. There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.15pm.</p>		

JKB 24/03/10

Signed.....(chairman) Dated.....