

**The Sixth Form College Farnborough  
Policy and Resources Committee Meeting, 7 March 2011  
Minutes**

The meeting opened at 5.05pm

Members Present: William Bagnall (Chair), Richard Acton, James Bacon, Peter Eyre, Linda Montgomery, Andrew Needham, Gregory Trigg, Terri Willcocks,

In Attendance: Simon Jarvis, Catherine Cole, Gordon Dodds, David Woodward, Alison Venner (Clerk)

**1. P 11/01 Apologies**

All members present.

**2. P 11/02 Declaration of Interests**

None declared

**3. P 11/03 Minutes of 24 November 2010**

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

**4. P 11/04 Matters Arising**

(a) Working Group to consider current working practices of the Corporation (10/43 b)

No further progression. William will make arrangements to take this forward.

*Action: William Bagnall*

(b) 2010 teaching and support staff pay settlement (10/46 b)

Support staff side have accepted the offer. The teaching side have rejected theirs; negotiations are still taking place to reach a settlement. A meeting of the Remuneration Committee will take place as and when needed.

(c) Chilworth Concordat update (10/47)

All sixth form colleges in the area apart from one have already agreed to sign the agreement. Two subgroups are looking at Quality Measures and Responsible Competition.

As all Colleges are likely to be considering increasing numbers, difficulties may arise from recruitment of students outside usual catchment areas and in areas where there is intense competition.

**5. P 11/05 Chair's Business**

This was Richard's last meeting; he was thanked for his contribution to the committee and wished the very best for the future.

## **6. P 11/06 National Developments**

Simon advised that there is still a lot happening. The Education White Paper was expected to result in legislation this autumn; the final funding was still to be announced, The Wolf Report had just been issued.

David Woodward gave a presentation on funding.

The funding methodology is based on a calculation which multiplies the Standard Learner Number (SLN) x the national funding rate x the provider factor + additional learner support (ALS).

David explained how the revision to the methodology will reduce the SLN by the introduction of a new cap of 1.56 SLN for any student, and further target the College because it is above the 80th percentile of funding by imposing an average SLN cap of 1.456. The national funding rate is expected to remain at £2,920 per SLN.

The changes together would mean a funding change of approximately £1.79 million, if the College student population did not increase. There will be a transition period; initially funding will reduce by no more than 3%. Taking on additional students would benefit the funding the following year, due to lagged funding.

As the Government wants to simplify funding, it is likely that the funding methodology will be revised in the medium term.

In order to provide students the opportunity to compete for the places in the best Universities, the College needs to continue to offer exceptional opportunities.

## **7. P 11/07 Funding for 2011-12**

Item (a) had been covered in the above discussions.

A number of letters were issued with the agenda which show the depth of concern over the funding cuts. It had been expected the sixth form colleges would receive cuts in funding in response to the Government's austerity measures, however it had not been expected that cuts would be as deep as 10%.

It was noted that school sixth forms were not being as badly affected and not raising as many issues. It was felt that they may be hoping for an increase in income from the pupil premium.

## **8. P 11/08 Review of College Strategy to 2014**

Issued with the agenda

A discussion took place on the funding projections for 2012 – 15. There are three options to consider:

1. The College takes no action to offset the funding cuts by 2014/15, resulting in a deficit on the P&L account of £1.39 million;

2. The College could maintain the student population at 3,254, necessitating a significant reduction in other costs to address the deficit, including staff. Such action would potentially destabilise the College and could lead to a reduction in the quality of provision;
3. The College could increase student numbers to about 3,500, control and reduce costs, including natural wastage of staff, to produce a modest surplus by 2014/15. (Model B of P 11/09 (a) papers)
  - Pay increments from performance management had been built into the projection.
  - The College plans indicate that it can accommodate the likely funding reductions for 2011-12.
  - The budget is currently being reviewed line by line.
  - Transition is currently expected until 2014. It is not known at what level but there are indications that it will continue at about 3% p.a.
  - Predictions have been prepared on a model provided by the YPLA.

The members considered a number of questions:

*Q. Are we assuming that the level of provision will be staying the same, therefore allowing students to follow a higher choice of courses and continuing to follow the Mission Statement as it currently is?*

The College is attractive because of what is on offer: range of courses, results, pastoral care, support, development. Although some areas of the College will need to change, it must still remain attractive in order to increase the number of students to 3500.

Strategic Aims SA 1 and SA 2 are critical:

- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Excellent care, guidance and support for all our students

*Q. Has the increase in students been risk assessed?*

*(a) Are there enough students who want places?*

Yes – it should be remembered that other colleges are also looking to increase student numbers, so time is of the essence. As the independent sector becomes unavailable to some, due to costs, more may look to the colleges. Principalship and the Governors will continue to monitor and review the College Admissions Policy to ensure its effectiveness.

*(b) Is there enough accommodation?*

Class sizes are comparatively favourable here, so there is some scope for increases.

Strategies have already been put in place to accommodate the above issues. A review is also taking place to allow for a further increase in September 2012. This is being looked at in full by the Principalship.

A review of all options will take place to look at all aspects of provision and delivery, increasing income, making greater use of technology.

*Q. How will this review be delivered? What is the order of events?*

- Governors at this committee were being asked to support the strategy to allow managed growth, and to contain costs.
- This will be recommended to the Corporation.
- Simon will make presentations at staff meetings week commencing 14 March 2011.
- Due to time constraints, this will have to be prior to the Corporation meeting of the 28 March.

It was stressed that Governors were agreeing to the strategic direction outlined by the Principal. Governors had sufficient understanding of the detailed implementation plans to agree that the strategy was appropriate and were confident that it will be deliverable.

Simon went through the "Review of the College Development Plan" issued with the agenda, highlighting:

- What is happening and the aims of the review
- How the strategy can be achieved and managed
- Explanation of proposed tutorial provision changes
- Review of roles and responsibilities of Personal Tutors
- Better use of block G (Wednesday afternoon)
- A consultation to take place for a revised timetable in 2012
- Efficiency gains are being thoroughly reviewed
- A review of the curriculum offer
- A reduction in staffing costs, including management structures
- Exploration of shared provision with other colleges
- As information available to the College is still changing, the financial documents are still being worked on

Governors requested that the way the plan is delivered to staff must be carefully considered; if it is taken out of context to the wider community it may have a negative effect on the future intake.

## **DECISION**

The Committee proposed that the Corporation adopt the paper "Review of the College Development Plan and Strategy, Principalship Update11/01" as reviewed at this meeting.

## **All in agreement**

### **9. P 11/09 Other Finance Matters**

(a) Strategic Cashflow to 2014 – issued with agenda  
Gordon explained the cashflows. Changes will be determined by requirements to accommodate additional students.

Tabled document – "Memo to Simon Jarvis, Re: Strategic Cashflow Forecasts to 2014 – as revised 28.2.11"

Gordon explained the document. Although initially prepared in October 2010, the revised version had not changed substantially.

(b) December 2010, January and February 2011 finance and management reports – issued with agenda

It was noted that items in red show that a reduction in spending was already noticeable so that budget surplus was improving.

## **DECISION**

**The Committee approved the financial reports under delegated authority.**

(c) The 16-18 Learner Responsive Statement for 2009/10 from the YPLA – issued with agenda

This had been covered in the meeting already; ultimately funding will be reduced.

(d) The annual course costings report for 2010-11 – issued with agenda.

These figures are reviewed annually. Red figures show courses running at a notional loss, which will have to be addressed in the current climate.

Simon was asked if this could be re-visited following curriculum changes.

*Action: Future Agenda*

## **10. P 11/10 Banking Facilities**

Copy of e-mail issued with agenda

The College kept within its limit last year, and it is not anticipated that there will be a problem this year with the reduced limit of £1.5m compared to last year's peak of £2.25.

## **11. P 11/11 Admissions 2011**

To receive a verbal report on predicted 2011 student admissions and the functioning of the 2011 Admissions Policy.

Catherine advised that the admissions process had gone well. There had been no appeals.

1667 students offered places

2412 interviews

800+ interviews still to take place before Easter

The computer generated selection process has resulted in a further 150 students to fill the additional places being offered in September, of which:

112 accepted

13 declined

25 no reply

## **12. P 11/12 Other Matters**

Documents issued with agenda

(a) Letters received concerning the matter of the Bridleway and Gated Crossing at Farnborough North railway station.

A further letter had been received from Gerald Howarth, MP, offering further help. No more to report.

(b) To receive results of the recent travel survey carried out by the College. Results show that the College continues to be fairly green. The new cohort will be asked for suggestions to increase green travel further.

(c) Correspondence received from the Headteacher at Weydon School, concerning their planned change of status to Academy.  
Noted by committee.

### **13. P 11/13 Any other business**

*Q. How much interaction is there between College and partner/link schools? Are weaknesses in students' education highlighted?*

Catherine explained that there is a transition system in place involving the link tutor and school representatives. Schools are asked to identify any issues or areas that the College needs to be aware of to support students.

Vince is on a Link Group for the 14 – 19 Partnership, where feedback could be given, but care has to be given on how to deliver this.

Date of next meeting: 20 June 2011, 5pm

Meeting closed at 7.40 pm