

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9th May 2019

Membership: *E Johnson (Chair)
*J Bedford
J Breen
B Spencer
* Denotes Present *K Spencer
P Taylor

In attendance: W Allanson, Deputy Principal
B Jones, Vice-Principal
P Whitehead, Vice-Principal
D Morgan, Executive Director – Finance & Facilities
K Craig, Head of Academy (English and Maths)
D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation

777 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from J Breen, B Spencer and P Taylor. Governors noted that R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation, was attending a regional Clerks' meeting.

778 Declaration of Interests

E Johnson declared that he is an Essex County Councillor.

779 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 6 December 2018 and the minutes of the joint Audit and Resources Committee meeting also held on 6 December 2018 were agreed as accurate records and were signed by the Chair..

The Committee noted that the meeting of the Resources Committee planned for 28 February 2019 could not proceed because it would not have been quorate. The Committee Chair was given an extensive briefing on all agenda items and items on the agenda were considered by the Corporation at its meeting on 14 March 2019.

780 Matters arising from the minutes and confidential minutes (not mentioned elsewhere on the agenda)

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

781 Harlow College Financial Statements and Financial Health

The Resources Committee received and considered the letter from the Education and Skills Funding Agency dated 21 March 2019 that confirmed the College's financial health grade for 2017/18 as Good.

The Principal informed the Committee that at a time when funding for the further education sector was tightening, the level of monitoring of Colleges was increasing. The financial health grade of Satisfactory will in future be Requires Improvement. There will be increased monitoring with a financial mid-year update required in January.

The Resources Committee received and considered the letter from the Office for Students on Financial Viability and Sustainability: information for governing bodies. The Principal informed the Committee that this mirrored the approach of the ESFA: higher education institutions were overestimating potential learner numbers, basing growth on increased numbers of students at a time of demographic decline and students following different pathways. The meeting noted that parallel policies were required to meet both ESFA and OfS systems.

782 Management Accounts for the period 1 August 2018 – 31 March 2019

The Resources Committee received and considered the Management Accounts for the period 1 August 2018– 31 March 2019, presented by D Morgan, Executive Director – Finance and Facilities.

The management accounts were discussed in detail and Governors noted that a £13k deficit was currently forecast against an anticipated target of £170k. Governors noted that this position arose from:

- the difficulties in achieving the Adult Education Budget because of reductions in the number of unemployed people resulting in fewer enrolments on employability programmes
- likely increases in service costs for the Local Government Pension Scheme. Governors were informed that the LGPS service costs will not be known until the end of August 2019.
- 37 full-time students attending Stansted Airport College are currently unfunded, due to starting after October 31st, penalising the College by £170,000. Governors noted that this has been raised with the ESFA.

In discussion, Governors noted that the cash position remains healthy, financial health remains good and the bank covenants are met. Expenditure however is under scrutiny and staff are looking to increase delivery of the Adult Education Budget.

783 Future Funding 2019-2020

The Resources Committee received and considered the report on the College's funding for 2019-2020, presented by Paul Whitehead, Vice-Principal

Governors noted the allocations received to date. The Vice-Principal reported that a further business case has been made to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for a second cohort of learners to enrol at Stansted Airport College in 2019/2020. The former funding regime for Apprenticeships is ending and the College expects to earn more from the Levy scheme. Adult Education Budget funding will decrease as the Government has allocated some of the funding to areas with devolved powers, London and Greater Cambridgeshire/Peterborough in Harlow College's case. An appeal has been made to the Greater London Assembly following a decision not to accept the College's tender.

The meeting discussed the income target set for higher education funding in light of the

letter from the Office for Students (item 781 refers). It was agreed that this should be considered further by the Principalship.

The Resources Committee thanked the Vice-Principal for his report.

784 Fees Policy 2019 / 20

The Resources Committee received and approved the Fees Policy for 2019 / 20.

785 Discretionary Support Fund Policy 2019 / 20

The Resources Committee received and approved the Discretionary Support Fund Policy for 2019 / 20.

In approving this policy, Governors noted that more students will be eligible to access the fund and support their education and training, thereby supporting recruitment.

786 Harlow College Project Developments

The Resources Committee received reports on two projects

786.1 Centre for Excellence in Maths project

Harlow College is one of 21 Colleges nationally to be funded under this initiative. Kirstie Craig, Head of Academy (English and Maths) informed the Committee that the project aims to help increase the number of young people leaving compulsory education with the necessary maths skills up to GCSE and Functional Skills level. Funding covers a range of actions including the cost of staffing, in particular to cover the costs of releasing people to attend meetings and professional development events. The College will participate in national trials in two strands overseen by the University of Nottingham, test new diagnostic tools and will receive the benefit of text books specifically designed by Pearson Education. The College has two major delivery partners, USP College and Northampton College and has already a network that includes six other Colleges.

The project represents significant investment into Harlow College and is expected to lead to other opportunities.

The Committee thanked Kirstie Craig for her presentation.

786.2 CITB Construction Hub project

Harlow College is one of 26 projects nationally to be funded under this initiative. The Construction Skills Fund (CSF) is a part of the Government's National Retraining Scheme focused on increasing the number of people trained in construction skills to create a workforce to meet the needs of the sector. The CSF will fund an on-site training hub to help build business infrastructure and homes.

The Harlow College On-Site Training Hub will be a mobile training centre with facilities to deliver education and practical skills. It will support the needs of significant construction projects such as the Public Health England site and Harlow North and will retrain older adults to work in the construction sector.

