



HARTPURY

MEETINGS OF THE STRATEGY, FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEES of HARTPURY UNIVERSITY AND HARTPURY COLLEGE

Minutes of Meetings 10am Monday 22nd November 2021 Gordon Canning Room

Members

Mr Edward Keene
 Mr Charlie Whitehouse
 Mr Henry Hodgkins
 Mr William Marshall
 Mr Russell Marchant
 Mr Alastair Grizzell
 Mr Chris Moody

University SFR Committee

Present (Chair)
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present (Vice-Chancellor)
 -
 -

College SFR Committee

Present (Chair)
 -
 -
 -
 Present (Principal)
 Present
 Apologies

In Attendance

Ms Lynn Forrester-Walker
 Mrs Rosie Scott-Ward
 Ms Claire Whitworth
 Ms Lesley Worsfold

Present (Chief Operating Officer)
 Present Pro-Vice-Chancellor)
 Present (Vice-Principal FE)
 Present (Vice-Principal Resources)

Present (Chief Operating Officer)
 Present Pro-Vice-Chancellor)
 Present (Vice-Principal FE)
 Present (Vice-Principal Resources)

Ms Gillian Steels

Present (Clerk to the Board)

Present (Clerk to the Board)

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
SFR01/11/21	Apologies Apologies noted as above. Quoracy It was confirmed that the University SFR Committee and the College SFR Committee meetings were quorate.	
SFR02/11/21	Declarations of Interest The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members' Interests. It was noted that the Chair, Vice-Chancellor/Principal and Chris Moody were members of both the University and College Boards.	
SFR03/11/21	Minutes of the Last Meetings The minutes of the University SFR Committee and the College SFR Committee 9 th June 2021 meetings were agreed as a true record.	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
SFR04/11/21	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The Actions Log update, confirming actions were either complete or in train was noted.</p> <p>It was agreed the COO would provide the cost relating to the electricity development for the Capital Projects, noting this cost had been moved to within the carpark development. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that the electrical support structure through the Hartpury Estate was now being reviewed given recent issues. It was confirmed there was sufficient electricity capacity for Graze.</p>	COO Dec 2021
SFR05/11/21	<p>People, Performance and Development Annual Report 2020/21</p> <p>The Vice-Principal Resources highlighted the report detailed the achievement against the HR performance indicators and other key statistics relating to the 2020/21 academic year. It was noted the report provided comprehensive reporting on the HR objectives embedded in the People, Performance & Development Strategy – Attract, Reward & Retain, High Performing Culture, Excellence in Leadership & Management, Learning & Development, Diversity, Inclusivity, Wellbeing and Positive Engagement and Operational Excellence.</p> <p>Key Points highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KPI for voluntary staff turnover for 2020/21 was 10%. The actual voluntary turnover was 11% which is slightly higher than KPI. • As of the 31st August 2021, the staff headcount was 654 staff compared to 649 in 2019/20. • The average number of days lost per employee was 3.13. Therefore, meeting the KPI of 5 days lost per employee. (Governors queried if this included the Covid related absence – post meeting it was confirmed this included Covid sickness absence but not Covid required isolation as staff continued to work during this) • The KPI target for this academic year was 100% of FE Academic staff to hold a teaching qualification or be working towards one. This target was achieved for FE Academic staff. • For HE Academic staff, in line with the university sector, we report on staff who hold a teaching qualification and do not include staff working towards a qualification. 82% of HE academic staff currently hold a teaching qualification against a KPI target of 92% largely due to the appointment of new staff. <p>Coronavirus Related Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two ‘mini’ staff surveys were conducted, 408 completed the survey in November 2020 and 351 completed the survey in May 2021. • Following the survey response, the HR team contacted staff with specific concerns to offer further support. • The key themes included COVID-19 legacy projects, COVID-19 measures on campus, health and wellbeing, remote working and communication mechanisms. 	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 93 staff were placed on furlough and the total amount claimed through the job retention scheme was £131,165.81. • 55 staff tested positive for Covid-19 and 208 staff were required to self-isolate during this period 	
	<p>The Committees considered the Turnover, noting that the Turnover by different groups highlighted different issues. It was noted that HE was now holding 8 vacancies which was not shown in the figures. The Committees discussed the Workplace Surveys. These indicated that expectations relating to work and working culture had changed. Hartpury was finding it difficult to attract the right candidates in some areas. Some posts were having to be advertised 3 or 4 times. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that this was particularly impacting some teams – for example the transport team which was paid the living wage was currently two staff down.</p>	
	<p>Governors queried whether Hartpury was bound by particular pay scales. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that Hartpury worked within agreed pay scales, but would be conducting a further review in relation to FE and professional services in some areas. The need to be competitive but also maintain the balance on costs was stressed by the Committee. It was recognised that recruitment and retention of staff was not all pay related and it was noted that staff feedback relating to Hartpury's Covid response had been positive, particularly in relation to wellbeing support, comms, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal's regular briefings, hybrid working options where appropriate etc. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor updated on some vacancies in Veterinary Nursing where options of home working had attracted staff away. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal stressed the importance of ensuring that changes to staff working did not impact on the student experience and the need to ensure access to facilities. Governors queried how many staff were currently hybrid working. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that the current year was a pilot with rotas in some areas, for example marketing and HR. It was subject to local manager agreement. She advised there was always an on-site presence. Governors queried the amount of defined HE student contact hours and were advised that in the first year this was 15 hours per week and in the second and third year 12 hours per week. As previously advised large scale lectures had remained online as part of the Covid legacy. It was noted that in FE there was some home working in response to the Covid legacy, but again this was carefully balanced to ensure the student experience was not impacted.</p>	
	<p>The use of external training support was discussed. It was confirmed this was carefully assessed prior to use to ensure it provided value for money. It was noted that Hartpury had used Advanced-HE for Race Equality and Diversity training and that this was now being taken forward through race change agents and the development of a Race Equality Group to take forward agreed actions. The Committees reflected on the different</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>terminology used in relation to promoting race equality and the need to ensure terminology used, such as white privilege was clearly explained and understood to ensure it impacted effectively. It was recognised that many of the industries Hartpury worked in were traditionally white, and that it was important to demonstrate a clear commitment to equality and diversity. It was agreed Hartpury's work with St James City Farm was a clear demonstration of this in action. It was confirmed the training was very balanced and had built on the earlier training on unconscious bias.</p> <p>Governors queried if the receipt of the PDR forms had now been completed as required and this was confirmed.</p> <p>Governors queried when the Board would be able to consider a proposal relating to HE salaries, recognising this was an area that had been raised previously, which had been postponed due to Covid. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised this would be an area which would be considered in the budget for 2021/22. He advised that Hartpury had benchmarked against a number of other HEIs and identified some posts which were c20% below others in the sector. It was recognised consideration of these issues were part of Hartpury's growing maturity as a university. It was recognised that any changes would need to be affordable. A governor questioned whether the benchmark of 92% qualified teachers was achievable in HE. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that this target reflected Hartpury's focus on teaching. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised the figure was below benchmark this year as there had been a significant number of new staff. The figure should improve subject to these staff being retained.</p>	
	<p>Governors queried how Hartpury benchmarked HR data. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that Landex provided helpful data. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that the HE sector was generally seeing less turnover but that there was more turnover in professional services. The Committees reflected on increasing costs which would impact over the year: inflation, energy, NI changes etc. Recognising these would impact on Hartpury but also individuals.</p>	
	<p>The People, Performance and Development Annual Report 2020/21 was ENDORSED.</p>	
<p>SFR06/11/21</p>	<p>Safeguarding Annual Report (including Prevent)</p>	
	<p>It was noted this was the second of two reports the Board receives on an annual basis. The report provides Governors with an update on Safeguarding and helps to ensure Governors are able to monitor and oversee Hartpury's Safeguarding activity including referrals to external agencies.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>The Vice-Principal Resources advised that the Safeguarding resources had been tweaked to provide more evening wellbeing support. Since September there were now two staff available in the evenings.</p>	
	<p>The Vice-Principal Resources commented that the impact of Covid had significantly increased the amount of work for the Safeguarding Team. There had been a 40% increase in referrals for safeguarding and wellbeing issues, in part demonstrating that staff fully understood the referral process, but also the impact of the Covid lockdowns. Mental Health was the highest category where support was being provided. There had also been increased behaviour management issues again due to Covid. It was confirmed that there was a strong focus on peer on peer abuse and that training on sexual abuse had been cascaded to staff as previously highlighted. It was noted that this issue had a high profile in response to the Ofsted and OfS increased focus. It was confirmed Hartpur had a zero tolerance on this. There was ongoing support and development for students in this area, for example sessions on Healthy Relationships.</p>	
	<p>The Committee was updated on Hartpur's recent feedback on Prevent, as a new university. It was confirmed that Hartpur's policies and procedures had been assessed and Hartpur had been visited to ensure it was operating in line with the required standards. This had been confirmed and Hartpur would be formally required to make a report to OfS on Prevent in December 2022. It was planned to do an internal report for 2021.</p>	
	<p>Governors queried whether HE and FE figures could be separated in the reporting. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that from this year referrals were being classified with programme so that this could be provided in future. The Vice-Principal Further Education commented that the FE Preparation for Success Training was working to support students who had increased anxiety around exams because these had not been in place for two years. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor commented that students had experienced very different development in the last two years in relation to relationships and developing healthy relationships because of the restrictions over lockdown. In both these areas help and support would be needed to support student transition.</p> <p>A governor queried whether there had been any instances of spiking of drinks. The Vice-Principal Resources advised there had been one reported instance. It was confirmed awareness raising was ongoing, and also the reinforcing of looking out for friends. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that the SU were very effective on ensuring these messages were effectively communicated. It was noted that some universities were offering training for students who were engaging in sex working. It was confirmed that the need to ensure students were keeping themselves safe was an area of ongoing focus.</p>	

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	The Annual Report on Safeguarding and Prevent for 2020/21 was ENDORSED.	
SFR07/11/21	Financial Statements – Review	
	<p>It was noted that the SFR Committees were given the opportunity to review the Financial Statements given their ongoing role during the year in monitoring the Management Accounts. It was noted that the Audit and Risk Management Committees would formally recommend the Financial Statements to the Board following their review of the Financial Statements and consideration of the External Audit Report.</p> <p>It was noted that the Boards of the 3 minor subsidiaries had met that morning and approved their Financial Statements.</p> <p>7.1 University</p> <p>It was noted that the Financial Statements included some elements of the costs relating to the New Vicarage Project, but not costs from which Hartpury might be able to benefit in the future such as design costs which might be able to be used in another area of Hartpury. It was confirmed the costs would be rereviewed next year, and that there had been a full breakdown of the costs. It was confirmed the Financial Statement outcome had not triggered an OfS Reportable Event. A governor queried if there would be a reconciliation to the July Management Accounts. The Chief Operating Officer advised there were no adjustments other than the New Vicarage costs. It was confirmed the pension position was covered in the pension notes. It was confirmed that the pension position would be looked at.</p> <p>The Financial Statements for the University Group were NOTED.</p>	
	7.2 College	
	The Financial Statements for the college were NOTED.	
	7.3 Other Subsidiaries	
	The Financial Statements for the Limbury, Hartpury Rugby and Rudgeley were NOTED.	
SFR08/11/21	Monthly Management Accounts – September 2021	
	<p>The Committee considered the Management Accounts for the 2-month period to end of September 2021. For this period there was a deficit of £3,585k, compared to a budgeted deficit of £3,705k. This variance was mostly as a result of higher HE Learning Support income and lower than budgeted pay costs. As agreed previously the regular 1/4ly reporting to the RFU for Hartpury RFC had been included. At this stage in the financial year this is budget information. A re-forecast will be undertaken for the December Management Accounts once Hartpury has submitted R04 to the ESFA for FE student numbers and our HESA return for HE students as this will give us a level of certainty on key income streams. It was highlighted that these</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	management accounts present the 'Group' position and incorporate all subsidiary activity.	
	<p>A governor queried the impact of the reduced funding from the RFU. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that for the next meeting a full analysis would be provided which would clarify cost allocations through a more detailed breakdown. The wider benefits to recruitment and opportunities for research and performance analysis that the presence of Hartpury Rugby provided were flagged. It was confirmed this was a USP for a range of courses. It was confirmed it also provided sponsoring opportunities.</p> <p>A governor queried the position re the farm relating to the lamb sales. The Chief Operating Officer advised that when the budget had been set it had been planned to sell the lambs this year, but this had been brought forward to pre the end of the 2020/21 financial year. A governor questioned whether the Farm Committee would be reconstituted following the change in governor membership or whether this would be taken forward differently in future. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal noted that the Farm Committee had an Advisory role and that once the new farm manager was in place it would be looked at to consider the best way to take this forward, including consideration of whether it should meet 6 monthly or quarterly.</p>	<p>COO Feb 2022</p> <p>Vice-Chancellor & Principal And Clerk and 3:1 Jan 2022</p>
	A governor noted that the costs of the EAA were shown as zero, which did not reflect costs to date. The Committees debated if it would be helpful to have a column which showed spend to date, but it was noted that the Management Accounts were also used more widely and that this was not necessary as the Capital Report gave the full information. A governor asked about the level of cash. It was noted grant funding would be shown in the October Management Accounts which would be issued shortly. It was confirmed the Going Concern information which was going to the Boards in December would clearly set out the position as well,	
	The University SFR Committee NOTED the Management Accounts. The College SFR Committee NOTED the Management Accounts.	
SFR09/11/21	<p>Enrolment Update FE</p> <p>The latest FE Enrolment data had been circulated which reflected the position following the 6 weeks census date. This showed 1952 students enrolled – 40 less than the previous year and below the stretch target of 2043. It was confirmed that the Agricultural area had grown as had been targeted (accommodation had also been targeted to support this) and that these students were more highly weighted which should protect overall income. Recruitment to Access to HE had been below target – this reflected a national picture. Governors queried the reason for students not staying after enrolment, noting that 2019 students had enrolled. It was noted that numbers were still ahead of the 2025 trajectory. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that an analysis was ongoing. Currently more mental health issues and homesickness were being reported. Issues around transport – and whether journey time was impacting on retention was also</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>being considered. It was confirmed the analysis included looking at where students were going and ensuring they were engaging in careers advice and involving parents. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that he saw all withdrawals. He commented that this cohort currently seemed to be demonstrating less resilience, due to the impact of Covid, and that parents also seemed less engaged. The mock exams seemed to have caused some students concern. It was confirmed that the Vice-Principal Resources presented to all residential FE parents to ensure expectations and support were clear. The need to ensure communications were issued in a suitable font to engage with parents was recognised.</p>	
	<p>Work was ongoing to consider opportunities around apprenticeships, subject to the level of funding to be confirmed. It was expected across the land-based sector over 78% of providers would cease apprenticeship work if the apprenticeship rates were not revised to cover costs.</p> <p>It was noted that the enrolment targets for the next 5 years were being worked through and would be discussed with the Boards at the April Strategic Event.</p>	
	HE	
	<p>The Pro-Vice-Chancellor circulated the latest HE enrolment position. It was noted that Hartpury had not hit its targets for Postgraduate or International but had increased headcount in undergraduate. She flagged that there had been a reduction in in year retention, although retention had been higher. This was currently subject to analysis. It was noted that a number had gone into employment and a number had withdrawn or suspended studies citing mental health. This had not been predicted. At this stage figures suggested a 1% deficit against budget. Work was ongoing to reduce this. The aim was to further improve retention and to undertake some January enrolment. It was noted work was ongoing to support the required access to resources to maintain the student experience. It was noted that the number of sports students had increased. It was confirmed that Hartpury graduate employability was positive, although it was recognised that there was work to do in ensuring graduate level jobs for those studying animal. It was noted that landlord provision seemed to be altering and impacting on students. It was confirmed that Hartpury University remained on target for the 2025 strategy growth projections.</p>	
	<p>The University SFR Committee and the College SFR Committee NOTED the latest enrolment information and actions planned.</p>	
SFR11/11/21	OFS Finance Return	
	<p>It was highlighted that the Office for Students required the submission of an annual finance return by the end of January 2022. This return provided both historical financial data for 2019/20 and 2020/21, current budgeted out turn for 2021/22 and future financial forecasts to 2025/26. The full return was available on the governors' website and the paper summarised the financial projections and the underlying assumptions. The 2019/20 financial data was prepopulated by the OfS based on our financial statements for that year. 2020/21 was based on the Financial Statements to be approved by the</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	Boards in December 2021. The 2021/22 financial data reflected the budget approved in July 2021. Future year's information is based upon updated student number projections for FE and HE which had been discussed by SMT as part of the ongoing update of progress towards delivery of the 2025 strategy.	
	The Committees considered the report and the assumptions set out. It was noted that the Return did not include the Levelling Up Grant as it was not yet clear when or how these funds would be drawn down. The Return did update on some information which had changed since the June budget was approved – i.e. the additional NI costs which would take £400k off the surplus. At this point it was not known if there would be further support for the Teachers Pension Scheme. These challenges were reflected in the return. It was confirmed the Return did not include the changes to HE salaries which were being considered, as discussed earlier in the meeting. It was confirmed the Financial Strategy would be considered at the Boards' Away Days. Governors commented that the information set out in Appendix A was very helpful. It was noted that the changes in relation to costs meant potential additional costs of £1m, which would be challenging. It was confirmed that some inflation was built into the Return.	
	Governors noted that the government was mooted to be considering the implication of a numbers cap which would be difficult for the sector. It was confirmed that the Capital Costs for 2021/22 would be added in. It was noted that the Levelling Up Grant should increase flexibility for refurbishment. It was confirmed that Triodos had indicated they would be willing to provide a further loan if this was something the Board wanted to explore in the future.	COO Dec 21
	The University SFR Committee APPROVED the OfS Finance Return and AGREED to RECOMMEND it to the University Board for APPROVAL. The College SFR Committee NOTED the update.	
SFR11/11/21	Agricultural Project Strategic Definition – Commercial Sensitivity – 5 years	
SFR12/11/21	Capital Project Report – Confidential – Commercial Sensitivity – 5 years	
SFR13/11/21	Sustainability Report	
	The Sustainability Manager had now been in post for a month. This appointment had proved popular with staff and students but that also brings challenges. There are many ideas and expectations on progress will need to be managed as progress will take time and needs to be co-ordinated. The Manager, Mike Brain, has produced a report of where he feels Hartpury is and some initial thoughts on priorities for the year ahead. This report is now being reviewed and he had been linked with the Director of Continuous Improvement to help support this. There will be a cost involved as we look to improve our understanding of on-site energy use. Moving forward from here	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	all builds must aim for BREAM Excellent, that will also add to costs but if managed correctly will reduce running costs going forward.	
	The Committees welcomed the progress whilst recognising the challenge presented in relation to costs, particularly in relation to meeting BREAM Excellent standard.	
	The Sustainability Report was NOTED.	
SFR10/06/21	Policy Updates* 14.1 Professional Code of Conduct 14.2 Health & Safety Policy 14.3 Public Interest Disclosure Policy	
	It was confirmed the policies were recommended by SMT. The Policies were APPROVED for RECOMMENDING to the Boards.	
SFR15/11/21	2023-2024 International Fees for BTECs, A Levels and T-Levels To be brought to the June meeting.	
SFR16/11/21	Bursary Policy Update The Report provided governors with a summary update of the various bursaries which are made available to our students each year and provided some context on the amount of spend against each bursary. The report was split across FE and HE although some philanthropic bursaries are open to both FE and HE students. The report followed a request from governors, recognising that the additional support for students due to Covid had increased some bursary support and the aim was to demonstrate the relative consistency of bursaries over time. It was highlighted that the majority of students who apply for support are successful. Students will only be declined if their particular circumstances do not fit with the criteria of the bursary they are applying for. The bursary application process remains open throughout the academic year enabling students to apply if their or their family circumstances change in year. This has been particularly helpful during the past 20 months of Covid when family circumstances have rapidly changed. The Committees NOTED the support provided through the bursaries.	
SFR17/11/21	VFM Strategy An updated Value for Money Strategy was provided. It had been reviewed as part of the annual review cycle. The changes were minimal and the Strategy will be reviewed again once the annual report is considered by Audit Committee at its April meeting. It is proposed going forward that the annual review of this policy is	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	considered at the May SFRC after the annual report has been received by Audit Committee.	
	The Committees APPROVED the Strategy for RECOMMENDING to the Boards and agreed the revised reporting period.	
SFR18/11/21	ESFA Feedback on Financial Health & Benchmarking based on Hartpury College of Further Education, College Financial Forecasting Return 2021 to 2023	
	The Feedback was NOTED. It was noted the information had also been discussed by the FE Board.	
SFR19/11/21	Committee Terms of Reference The Terms of Reference were NOTED. It was suggested that the need for an additional meeting or a Capital Subgroup be explored to ensure meeting length was reasonable and that there could be sufficient time to debate and challenge.	Feb 2022 Clerk, VC&P, Chair
SFR20/11/21	Any Other Business None	
SFR21/11/21	Dates of future meetings 8 th February 2022 3 rd May 2022 22 nd June 2022 29 th November 2022	

The meeting closed at 1.10pm