



HARTPURY

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

Minutes of Meetings 10.00am Tuesday 9th February 2021 MS Teams

Members

Mr Edward Keene
Mr Charlie Whitehouse
Mr Henry Hodgkins
Mr William Marshall
Mr Russell Marchant
Mr Graham van der Lely
Mr Chris Moody

University SFR Committee

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

College SFR Committee

Present (Chair)
-
-
-
Present (Principal)
Present (until 12.35)
Present

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)
Absent 11-11.30
Present (Clerk to the Board)
Present – for Item 10 – Milestone
Reports 11.25-12.35

Present (Chief Operating Officer)
Present (Pro-Vice-Chancellor)
Present (Vice-Principal FE)
Present (Vice-Principal Resources)
Absent 11-11.30
Present (Clerk to the Board)
Present – for Item 10 – Milestones
Reports

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
SFR01/02/21	<p>Apologies There were no apologies. It was noted that Graham van der Lely would need to leave early.</p> <p>Quoracy It was confirmed that the University SFR Committee and the College SFR Committee meeting was quorate.</p>	
SFR02/02/21	<p>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.</p> <p>There were no declarations of members' interests for agenda items</p>	
SFR03/02/21	Minutes of the Last Meetings	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	The minutes of the University SFR Committee and the College SFR Committee 14 th January 2021 meetings were approved as true records.	
SFR04/02/21	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The Actions Log update, confirming actions were either complete or in train was noted.</p> <p>The Vice-Principal Resources advised that HR had reviewed the query on length of service raised in November when the Annual HR Report had been discussed. She advised that the review had indicated the position had not changed significantly from the previous year, staff turnover had reduced and overall the issue was not considered to be one of concern. She advised that for the next report it was planned to break down the detail into University, College and Professional Services staff to understand the staffing situation in the different areas more clearly.</p>	VP Res Ann HR Rep Nov 2021
SFR05/02/21	<p>Monthly Management Accounts – December 2020</p> <p>The Committees considered the Management Accounts for the 5-month period to end of December 2020. It was highlighted that for this period there was a deficit of £1,271, compared to a budgeted deficit of £1,060k. This variance was mostly as a result of additional Covid costs and lower income in some areas due to Covid restrictions in force on campus and lower footfall.</p> <p>It was confirmed that as agreed when the budget was approved in July 2020, a re-forecast will be provided each month this year to reflect the ever changing position with regard to Covid-19 impact on the financial position.</p> <p>It was noted that the December reforecast takes account of impact of the current lock down extending through this term to Easter and thus assumes that student accommodation, livery and transport fees will be refunded for the majority of students in this period, and other commercial income including catering, bars, conferencing and sports academy will be negatively impacted. To ameliorate these negative impacts an additional £770k of HE funding is recognised, reflecting additional student growth and the unbudgeted HE-If allocation, £134k of income from the Job Retention Scheme. Cost savings have also been recognised in catering, bars, transport, sport and equine. This results in a reforecast surplus of £221k compared to a budget of £1,320k.</p> <p>It was noted that the Management Accounts presented the 'Group' position and incorporated all subsidiary activity. Within the reporting the financial performance to contribution level was provided for HE and FE Education.</p>	
	A governor reflected on the payroll costs, noting there were some unfilled posts in Maths and English and queried this was planned or reflected a difficulty with recruitment. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that there were no specific shortages of staff and staff were in place for Maths and English. A governor expressed surprise that catering costs had not reduced. The Chief Operating Officer advised that the catering staff were currently all fully employed, some were undertaking the regular activities required to prevent legionella (such as water flushing). It had been agreed it was more cost effective to use Hartpury staff for this than the external company which had been used in the summer. Some catering staff had	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>been redeployed to the lateral flow testing station. Furloughing, including flexi-furloughing was being kept under ongoing review and used where appropriate. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal highlighted that furlough income was not being offset against individual departments. The Vice-Principal Resources emphasised that during this lockdown there were a significantly higher number of students still on site who needed to be supported and catered for – over 110 against under 20 the previous year and students were continuing to come on site. It was noted the testing station costs were included in the Accounts and that the income was not yet being reflected.</p>	
	<p>Governors queried some of the commercial activity costs. The Chief Operating Officer advised that because of the timing of the announcement of the third lockdown it had not been possible to cancel coach services in the way it had been the previous year, therefore Hartpury was committed to pay for the services for the term. There would be savings in relation to fuel and maintenance costs. Currently it was being assumed the Equine Events in the summer would continue.</p>	
	<p>Governors discussed the impact on the budget of the refund of accommodation costs depending on when lockdown was lifted.</p>	
	<p>The University SFR Committee NOTED the Management Accounts. The College SFR Committee NOTED the Management Accounts..</p>	
<p>SFR06/02/21</p>	<p>Annual Health and Safety Report</p>	
	<p>The Committees considered the 2019/2020 Health & Safety Annual Report, noting its was primarily focused on the health and safety activities undertaken to ensure compliance with legislation, guidance and advice from the UK government and other regulatory bodies with regard to Covid-19. It was agreed it provided governors with a comprehensive overview of health and safety activities over the academic year 2019/2020.</p>	
	<p>The subsidiary comprehensive report detailing the impact of COVID-19 on Hartpury from September 2020 to 1 January 2021 and the associated response, paying particular attention to the activities implemented to monitor COVID-19 cases, Track and Trace individuals at risk, and manage student isolation across campus accommodation was also reviewed.</p> <p>It was noted that since September 2020, two teams have primarily been involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Covid Response Team – key responsibilities included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support & coordination of services to students in isolation across campus due to suspected & positive cases - Managing the Covid Response inbox; dealing with all COVID-19 related enquiries, keeping FE parents informed & updated on cases affecting their child, ensuring staff were up to date on the status of campus households etc. 🔴 Covid Track and Trace Team – key responsibilities included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing the track and trace process, implemented to identify close contacts (at Hartpury) of every positive case. 	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>- Supporting the programme of mass asymptomatic testing for residential students.</p> <p>Key information highlighted in the report was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of Covid cases (52%) involved students who were living off campus. • 64% of student cases were HE students. • 339 'close contacts' were identified by Hartpurys Track and Trace team. • The 5-day notification average could be reduced by student engagement; 79% of students replied to requests for information. • There were 55 household isolations on campus – 24 of these as a result of a positive test/s. • 17 accommodation households did not experience a period of isolation – 42 households experienced one or more. (779 out of 1098 students affected) • A total of 8,377 meals were delivered to household isolations – 12% of these had specific dietary or allergy requirements. • Over 5,000 emails were received into the Covid response/Track and Trace inboxes (4,379 sent). • Common themes of queries and concerns from FE parents included exercise/outdoor access for isolating students, meal quality, wellbeing, laundry & cleanliness. • MS Teams was crucial in coordinating block isolations and keeping in contact with students. • Areas for improvement/consideration include; exercise provision in self-isolation, support for individuals isolating not as part of a household and involvement from the Student Union. • December's mass asymptomatic testing programme delivered 709 student tests and 40 staff tests; all of these tests were negative. • Lessons learnt from the booking process will be incorporated into planning for mass testing in January 2021 • Total COVID-19 expenditure to date is £783,866 (<i>does not include mass testing costs</i>). 	
	<p>The Committees considered the reports and confirmed the assurance provided. It was confirmed that the Covid Response Team continued to meet weekly to undertake review and planning for a range of scenarios. The Risk Assessments were kept under ongoing review.</p>	
	<p>Governors commented that the reports were comprehensive and excellent and clearly demonstrated the work Hartpurys had put in place to ensure the effective handling of Health and Safety across the organisation generally, and particularly in relation to the pandemic. Governors suggested that more could have been included on Mental Health and Wellbeing, recognising the support Hartpurys had been providing in these areas. It was noted that there had been one student death and a review was ongoing to identify any lessons which could be learnt and make any required changes to procedures.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	Governors commented that the content of the reports was triangulated by staff, parents and student feedback – the vast majority of which was extremely positive about the support provided.	
	Governors commented on the need to ensure succession planning was in place for the Health and Safety Team. The Vice-Principal Resources confirmed this was being kept under review, with options including consideration of Health and Safety Audit via our insurers and use of a Health and Safety App.	
	A governor queried the learning process that took place when there had been a near miss. It was confirmed any near miss or accident was reviewed risk areas discussed and follow up actions, which included feeding back to staff and students to ensure lessons were learnt, were put in place. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that the Health and Safety Manager circulated alerts on areas to the relevant managers to ensure that lessons were also learnt from other organisations. The Chair thanked the Vice-Principal Resources for the very helpful report.	
	The University SFR Committee APPROVED the Annual Health & Safety Report. The College SFR Committee APPROVED the Annual Health & Safety Report.	
SFR07/02/21	Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) Return	
	The University SFR Committee considered the report which provided the finalised 2019/20 TRAC return for submission to the OFS. It was noted that due to Covid 19, the requirement for the filing of the return has been extended to one month after the submission of the Annual Finance Return and before 31 st March 2021 and the requirement to submit a TRAC-T return for 2019/20 had also been removed. It was noted that the annual TRAC return, allocated income and expenditure to teaching, research and other activities. Hartpury had an integrated TRAC model developed for us for the 2018/19 return which had been updated for the audited financial out turn for 2019/10. The output from this model had then been input to the TRAC Return a copy of which was available on the Governors' Website. It was noted that the Return had been reviewed by the External Consultant who had helped Hartpury develop the model and no issues had been raised. It was noted that the Return was a more useful indicator in a Research Institution, and as a track record developed.	
	The University SFR Committee APPROVED the TRAC Return for submission to OfS. The College SFR Committee NOTED the TRAC Return.	
SFR08/02/21	Policy Update	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Regulations 	

It was noted that the Financial Regulations had been subject to their annual review and updated to reflect latest best practice and changes to processes and systems. Changes made were highlighted within the document.

Key changes were:

- The additions at the start of the document of a summary of the scheme of delegation to ensure clarity
- Provided clarity on page 24 where procurement support will be utilised
- Within section 8 – reference is made to the Campus Development approach agreed at the January SFRC, detail was included regarding control around Maintenance projects
- Within Section 11 – inclusion of requirements around lease finance
- Throughout the document authorisation levels have been reviewed to make them more consistent throughout.

It was noted that the document had been reviewed by the Executive and by Finance colleagues to ensure it reflected actual practice.

COO Mar 21

A Governor suggested it was not clear whether the references to leases applied to operating leases or all leases. The Chief Operating Officer advised it included finance leases and agreed to clarify this. A governor queried the change in value of maintenance project sign offs and how monitoring would be undertaken. The Chief Operating Officer advised that the Capital Report would include all projects to support SFR monitoring. It was noted that SFR could request additional information if it considered this was appropriate, but the aim was to ensure that projects could proceed with timeliness and that SFR could focus on the projects of most importance. It was noted that overall project spend was set within the budget which ensured Board and SFR oversight, and that the delegation proposed would provide the Executive with the ability to respond quickly to any issues, for example Health and Safety, recognising that SFR generally met on a termly basis. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that examples of this had been the need to improve IT connectivity rapidly over the summer to respond to the pandemic adjusted ways of working, improvements considered for Rudgeley Buildings.

COO Mar 21

A governor asked for clarification on whether value of the lease referred to annual value or over the life of the lease. The Chief Operating Officer advised it related to the total value of the lease and confirmed she would clarify the wording. Governors considered the approval levels, noting the need to avoid becoming bureaucratic but remaining informed. It was confirmed the Capital Project approval levels remained the same as the previous year. Governors reflected on the delay the previous year in bringing Milking Parlour to SFR for consideration and approval, and the need to ensure appropriate escalation. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that the revisions to the Financial Regulations, including the additional section on delegations at the front of the Financial Regulations aimed to ensure clarity, improve transparency and to learn lessons from issues highlighted by governors.

The Chair recognised that the maintenance spend was included within the budget. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal commented that the Maintenance Budget spend could relate to up to 50-60 projects which were being

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	<p>considered on an ongoing basis by the estates team to ensure best value. It was agreed SFR did not want to be focusing on minor works. It was confirmed that regular reporting on Major Capital Projects would be a regular item within the Capital Report. Where a Project was approved at SMT it would be reported to SFR. It was confirmed that Capital Project over £1m would be subject to a Post Project Review by SFR (amount in Financial Regulations to be revised from £2m.)</p> <p>It was noted that the Financial Regulations only referred to governors "Travel expenses". It was agreed this should be revised to "travel and subsistence" in relation to meeting their Board responsibilities.</p> <p>The College and University SFR Committees APPROVED the Financial Regulations for Recommendation to the Board.</p>	<p>COO ongoing</p> <p>COO Mar 21</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement <p>It was noted the statement had been subjected to minor revision and now included reference to subcontractors and delivery partners.</p> <p>The College and University SFR Committees APPROVED the Anti-Slavery Trafficking Statement for Recommendation to the Board.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refunds Policies (FE and HE) <p>It was noted this was a new policy, in line with a recommendation from OfS that Universities put in place a policy which drew together all refund processes. The Policy consolidated information from a number of agreements such as livery, transport, accommodation, tuition fees etc. It was confirmed the Policy would be reviewed annually.</p> <p>The College and University SFR Committees APPROVED the Refunds Policy (HE and FE) for Recommendation to the Board.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Fees 2022 Entry <p>It was noted this policy was reviewed annually and a minor change had been made to the fees for the Diploma for Veterinary Nursing. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised she was currently trying to obtain benchmarking data to support the review of EU and International postgraduate Fees. Recognising the volume of students it was agreed that any additional changes could be delegated to the SMT.</p> <p>The University SFR Committees APPROVED the HE Fees Policy on behalf of the Board, with delegation to SMT to vary the EU and International Postgraduate Fees following a review of the benchmark data.</p>	
SFR09/02/21	Committee Terms of Reference	
	<p>It was noted that the Terms of Reference had been reviewed against other organisations, consideration of the remit required to be covered by the Board as a whole and feedback sought from the Senior Team to update the Terms</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>of Reference. The updated versions aimed to improve clarity on reference points for Committee and Board approvals and reflect the decisions relating to capital project monitoring. The proposed terms of reference now included reference to Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity and Sustainability, staff wellbeing and Digital.</p> <p>The Committees considered the issues of IT and cyber security and the appropriate place for assurance on cyber security to be considered. Following debate it was suggested that an Annual Report on Cyber Security should go to the Audit and Risk Management Committee and then on to the Board, it was agreed this should be added to the agenda cycle. The importance of ensuring sufficient focus on cyber security was recognised. It was confirmed the IT Team devoted significant time to this and that external expertise was also employed, at least annually. It was confirmed staff received online training in cyber awareness.</p> <p>A governor queried whether adding IT and sustainability to the remit of the Committees would be too much of a workload. It was noted that on-line teaching was considered at QuEST. It was agreed this should be a matter for debate within the Boards.</p>	Clerk May 2021
	The University SFR Committee and College SFR Committee AGREED to further reflect on their Terms of Reference following input from the Boards.	Clerk May 2021
	11.25am Mark Price, Vitruvius was welcomed to the meeting	
SFR10/02/21	Capital Projects – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – 5years due to commercial sensitivity	
SFR11/02/21	Any Other Business	
	Rugby Update	
	It was noted that talks were ongoing in relation to the RFU Championship. It was recognised this was a period of uncertainty.	
SFR12/02/21	Dates of future meetings all at 11.00am.	
	11 th May 2021	
	24 th June 2021	
	4 th November 2021	

The meeting closed at 13.20