



HARTPURY

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

Minutes of Meetings 10am Tuesday 7th February 2023 Gordon Canning Room and MS Teams

Members

Mr Edward Keene
Mr Henry Hodgkins
Mr William Marshall
Mr Robert Brooks
Professor Andy Collop
Mr Alastair Grizzell
Mr Chris Moody

University SFR Committee

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

College SFR Committee

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

In Attendance

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

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

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

Ms Gillian Steels

Present (Clerk to the Board)

Present (Clerk to the Board)

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
SFR01/02/23	<p>Apologies Apologies noted as above.</p> <p>Quoracy It was confirmed that the University SFR Committee and the College SFR Committee meetings were quorate.</p>	
SFR02/02/23	<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>	
SFR03/02/23	<p>Minutes of the Last Meetings The minutes of the University SFR Committee and the College SFR Committee 14th November 2022 meetings, subject to clarification on attendees at the Farming Committee and noting that "pay had risen faster than income", were agreed as true records.</p> <p>The electronic approval of the TRAC return was NOTED.</p>	

<p>SFR04/02/23</p>	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The Actions Log update, confirming actions were either complete or in train was noted.</p> <p>Sustainability</p> <p>It was noted that a recruitment exercise was ongoing for the Head of Sustainability. It was agreed an update on Sustainability would therefore be brought to the Committees in November.</p> <p>Management Accounts – Capital Graph</p> <p>To be included in next set of Management Accounts.</p> <p>Overnight Investment of Funds</p> <p>Noted that there was currently insufficient capacity for this, and returns would be limited. It was confirmed the matter would be further reviewed in March once the new member of the Finance Team joined.</p> <p>HE January Recruitment</p> <p>It was confirmed there had been a small number of new starters, mainly postgraduates. The focus was now on September recruitment.</p> <p>Confidential Item - redacted</p>	
<p>SFR05/02/23</p>	<p>Monthly Management Accounts –December 2022</p> <p>The Committee considered the Management Accounts for December 2022. It was noted that the operating result for the five months ending December 2022 was a deficit of £1,054k compared to a budgeted deficit of £1,739K. The favourable variance was mostly resulting from higher HE income and additional grant income together with lower than budgeted staffing costs mostly as a result of vacancies. The Reforecast had not changed from previous months and would be reviewed in more detail 6 months into the year for the January Management Accounts.</p> <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash balances at the month end were £2,708k. • The University had an overdraft facility of £1m. • The University complied with its bank covenants and was forecast to continue to do so. <p>It was noted that retention of staff in agriculture and catering remained challenging.</p> <p>Governors queried the student residential occupancy level. It was noted that this was showing actual occupancy, but it was confirmed that students would be continuing to pay until the end of the financial year even if they had withdrawn. It was confirmed that students leaving in year were followed up to identify reasons. The Deputy-Principal Further Education advised that numbers of leavers were at the same level as the previous year. It was noted that the HE occupancy level was lower than some previous years. It was noted that in some instances a student would cease to live in Hartpury accommodation but would continue to complete their course. It was noted some students had withdrawn from Hartpury accommodation citing the quality, others due to anxiety. Those living on site had the lowest withdrawal rates. Governors queried if planned refurbishments would improve student satisfaction with accommodation. They were advised that the non-self-catering block were being prioritised, and that students had a preference for self-catering. The Deputy- Principal Resources advised that by September 2023 all university accommodation would be self-catering. It was noted this was charged at a higher rate.</p>	

	<p>Governors highlighted the increased utility charges. They were advised that Hartpury had had some fixed contracts in place which had needed to be renegotiated, and that the current national utility context had made this challenging.</p> <p>The Chief Operating Officer advised that the Hartpury plans in relation to the electricity supply should give more resilience in the longer term. She also advised that unfortunately the High voltage cable was now expected to be in place end of May rather than March due to delays by Gloucestershire Highways. (see item 7).</p> <p>Governors queried whether catering costs were increasing to reflect increase food and drink costs. It was confirmed this was in place from January, following work with a consultant on pricing.</p>	
	<p>The University SFR Committee NOTED the December 2022 Management Accounts.</p> <p>The College SFR Committee NOTED the December 2022 Management Accounts.</p>	
SFR06/02/23	Confidential Item Commercially Sensitive – Restricted 3 years	
SFR07/02/23	Confidential Item Commercially Sensitive – Restricted 3 years	
SFR 08/02/23	Confidential Item Commercially Sensitive – Restricted 3 years	
SFR 09/02/23	Confidential Item Commercially Sensitive – Restricted 3 years	
SFR 10/02/23	Pension Update	
	<p>Following on from a number of years where the impact of the LGPS valuation significantly distorted reported out turns and the level of employer contributions had grown a paper was presented to the committees in February 2022 setting out the details of the LGPS and some possible next steps, governors had then requested that some case studies of how other colleges and universities had approached changes in their pension offer to reduce the long term liabilities that Hartpury are incurring with regard to the LGPS were provided.</p> <p>It was noted that currently the LGPS pension liability at 31st July 2022 was a deficit of £2.3m compared to a deficit at 31st July 2021 of £24.5m.</p> <p>The paper provides two brief case studies for two local providers Gloucestershire College and University of Gloucestershire who had both introduced additional pension arrangements for groups of staff over the past few years.</p> <p>The case studies demonstrated a couple of approaches both of which have longer term benefits in terms of pension liabilities but also have risks around pension liability crystallisation at some point in the future.</p> <p>The Committees considered the report, and the need to avoid crystallising the liabilities of the pension scheme if any changes were considered. It was confirmed that Hartpury was part of the TPS and</p>	

	<p>LGPS pension schemes and was not part of USS. It was confirmed that GC considered that the introduction of the additional pension scheme had attracted some staff. It was confirmed the schemes had not led to equal pay issues. Governors commented that the aim was to have staff who had a long-term commitment to Hartpury, and therefore the benefit of two pension scheme options for professional services staff could be divisive and was not necessarily an aspect requiring development at this time. It was agreed that a watching brief should be kept on this issue.</p> <p>Governors queried whether staff at Hartpury were taking part in industrial action. The Deputy Principal Resources advised that they were not. It was noted that staff management relationships were currently good.</p> <p>It was noted that currently c25 students were working part time in catering – this opportunity was one that was welcomed by students. It was confirmed the opportunity was incorporated in student recruitment information.</p>	
	The Committees NOTED the update and the Senior Team AGREED to keep the issue under ongoing review but not to progress the matter at this time.	
SFR 11/02/23	Financial Regulations	
	<p>The Financial Regulations had been reviewed as part of the annual review cycle, amended as necessary and were proposed for APPROVAL. The main changes were:</p> <p>Page 24 – inclusion of a process for single source supplier</p> <p>Page 25 – update on current Public Procurement requirements</p> <p>Page 41 – update on staff and governor hospitality to reflect new policy aligned to latest HMRC rules regarding taxable benefits – a governor requested a copy of this and the Clerk agreed to provide it.</p> <p>Appendix A – updated Terms of Reference for Strategy, Finance and Resources Committees</p> <p>Appendix F- Expenses Policy – Eye examinations is highlighted as HMRC have changed their rules and our current approach to re-imbursment for eye examinations would give rise to a taxable benefit we are considering other options to alleviate this impact</p> <p>Appendix I – new policy – Employee and Governor Entertaining Policy, aligned to latest HMRC rules regarding taxable benefits</p> <p>Appendix K - updated Terms of Reference for Audit and Risk Management Committees</p>	Clerk Complete
	The Financial Regulations were APPROVED.	
SFR 12/02/23	Policy Update	
	<p>Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement – a spelling noted for updating Refunds Policy - FE - changes to the email addresses noted for updating Refunds Policy -HE - changes to the email addresses noted for updating HE Tuition Fees – deferred to May.</p>	
	The Committees APPROVED these policies subject to the minor revisions detailed being made.	

SFR13/02/23	Any Other Business	
	None	
	Dates of future meetings were noted.	

The meeting closed at 12 noon

APPROVED MAY 2023

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