

Preston's College

Minutes of the Business Planning Committee meeting held on 10th March 2016

Present

Mr P Kennedy (Chair)

Mr S Browne
Dr E H Smith

Mr M Mallam

In attendance

Mr S Nixon (Executive Director of Resources)
Mr C Speight (Vice Principal – Enterprise and Engagement)
Mr S Fell (Clerk to the Corporation)
Mr P McMellon (Assistant to the Clerk)

17. Welcome and Apologies

The Committee noted that apologies had been received from Mr E Bassa, Mr J Boydell and Mrs L Hornsby.

18. Declarations of Interest

No member declarations of interest were made.

Mr S Fell and Mr P McMellon reminded the Committee of their status as employees of UCLan.

19. Management Accounts – Period 6

The Committee received the Period 6 Management Accounts, together with a covering report and associated documentation including a cash flow forecast for the period up to July 2017, a consolidated income/expenditure report and a consolidated balance sheet.

REDACTED

Resolved: That the Period 6 Management Accounts report be noted.

The Chair noted that recruitment and retention of students clearly continued to be key to financial stability and, with that in mind, he invited Mr C Speight to update the Committee on ongoing marketing and recruitment activities.

Mr Speight presented a report entitled 'Activities Update' and drew attention to various aspects of the College's 'Schools Engagement' initiatives. He confirmed with 10% more applications had been received than in 2014/15, which gave cause to optimism. The Committee recognised the current popularity of the College's Aeronautical Engineering course and, in considering the potential to develop other 'niche' courses concurred that stimulating recruitment was challenging and complex.

With regard to 'Employer Engagement', Mr Speight drew attention to the St Catherine's Hospice development. The Committee discussed this success and reflected on how similar initiatives (including links with LCC on care/end of life provisions) might benefit the College.

It was agreed that future agendas include 'Enterprise and Engagement Update' as a standing item.

20. Three Year Financial Forecast - Update

Mr Nixon presented the revised Financial Forecast. He reminded the Committee that the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) had required a response to a number of questions arising from their review in the Autumn of the original Financial Forecast. He advised that the Comprehensive Spending review had, in fact, resulted in fewer challenges than had been expected, but details of the SFA's 2016/17 allocation was still awaited. The SFA had not yet responded to the revised Forecast which the College had submitted.

In discussing other factors which could affect the College's financial strength, consideration was also given to the future management of the area's Adult & Continuing Learning allocation. It was agreed that an update on developments affecting the College's involvement would be provided at the next meeting.

Resolved: That the report on the revised Financial Forecast be noted.

21. Main Funding Allocation 2016/17

Mr Nixon presented a report setting out details of the main funding allocation for 2016/17. In summarizing the report, Mr Nixon confirmed that the Education Funding Agency (EFA) allocation for 2016/17 was marginally better anticipated.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

22. Performance Against KPIs

The Committee received a report setting out the College's performance against its Key Performance Indicators, covering Responsiveness, Quality, Financial Sustainability and HR.

Mr Nixon commented on each aspect of the report.

In response to a question from the Committee Mr Nixon confirmed that complaints at the College were in relation to a broad range activities with no particular area/subject producing a disproportionate volume of complaints. The Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that whilst complaints had historically been focused on specific areas of the College work had resolved matters.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

23. Strategic Planning Event (4 February 2016) - Update

Mr C Speight presented the papers covering developments since the Strategic Planning Event on 4 February 2016. He explained that discussions with UCLan had been extremely promising and was emerging as the preferred option.

The Committee noted that it was intended to have developed a business case by the end of April 2016 and as a result agreed that it may be necessary to convene one or more special meetings of the Board before the end of the Academic Year.

The Committee underlined the importance of the College acquiring independent financial and legal due diligence on any potential collaboration.

Resolved: That the report, including the intention to create an initial Business Plan by the end of April 2016, incorporating all project work streams and appropriate due diligence, be noted.

Date of Next Meeting: 12 May 2016