

# EASTON&OTLEYCOLLEGE

Minutes of the Strategic Finance Committee meeting held on Wednesday  
9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 commencing at 8.30am at the Easton Campus Norfolk

## **Present**

S Coby	<b>SC</b>	Independent Member
M Pendlington	<b>MP</b>	Independent Member
G Pilcher	<b>GP</b>	Independent Member & Committee Chair
J Townsend	<b>JT</b>	Principal
T Barker	<b>TB</b>	Co-opted Member (via telephone)

## **In Attendance**

J Cook	<b>JC</b>	Interim Vice Principal/Finance
R Robson	<b>RR</b>	Director of Governance

1	<b><u>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</u></b>		
	Apologies were received from Chris Nix		
2	<b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>		
	GP	-	RNAA
	MP	-	University of Suffolk
	No other declarations of interest were received for any items on the Agenda.		
3	<b><u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u></b>		
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2018 were reviewed and <b>confirmed</b> as a true and accurate record of those meetings for signature by the Chair		
4	<b><u>Actions and Matters Arising</u></b>		
4.1	11.10.17	Action 1	Review of the Committee TOR to be undertaken as part of overall Governance review. Ongoing
	17.1.18	Action 1	JC confirmed Farm Accounts going to May Board meeting. JT confirmed that a new Farm Group to be chaired by David Nunn was being established, a stakeholder supper is planned for the summer to get stakeholder support. SC <b>agreed</b> to join the Farm Group to add accountancy strength. GP noted the value of the Farm Accounts as a teaching

			<p>tool, the aim this year should be to get systems in place and to aim for quarterly reporting in future years. MP queried the procurement process in place for the farm. The conflict between the College's procurement requirements to obtain three quotes and external group purchasing schemes was noted. Action <b>agreed</b> complete.</p>
	17.1.18	Action 4	<p>LGPS to come to Committee in September 18. Action ongoing</p>
	12.3.18	Action 1	<p>SFC Committee continues to review re-structure. Action continuing to completion of re-structure.</p>
	12.3.18	Action 2	<p>Salary and rewards review to commence summer 2018. Action ongoing.</p>
	12.3.18	Action 5	<p>Discussion on depth of information required by governors on contribution by course information provided in management accounts. JC confirmed that for the 18/19 academic year planned levels of contribution will be based on the curriculum planning process so a summary by department will be included. Detail to be provided by exception to governors where there are financial or performance implications. Action <b>agreed</b> complete.</p>
	12.3.18	Action 9	<p>No resolution to position taken by Savills on security to be taken to the satisfaction of the College. Still looking for more coverage than needed. Need to be sure on the land taken as security noted. Action ongoing.</p>
	11.4.18	Action 1	<p>Paper on progress with banks shared. Action <b>agreed</b> complete.</p>
	11.4.18	Action 2	<p>JC attended first meeting of Strategic Review Group. Action <b>agreed</b> complete.</p>
	11.4.18	Action 3	<p>Dates for June and July agreed. Corporation to meet on 12<sup>th</sup> September to review enrolment. Action <b>agreed</b> complete.</p>
4.2	<b><u>Matters arising</u></b>		
	<p>JC updated further on finance department staffing. He confirmed that the Head of Finance position had been removed in the restructure. A temporary appointment to a finance assistant vacancy has been made.</p>		
	<p>April Management Accounts will be available for the Board meeting at the end of</p>		

the month. GP asked if there were any surprises in the accounts' JC confirmed that he was not anticipating any.

JT advised that following a previous re-structure 28 members of staff had had salaries held at previous levels, despite a new pay structure, until pay rates increased and 'caught up'. This had not happened. Those staff still with the College were now therefore on higher rates of pay than they would otherwise be. Some will be leaving under the tier 5 restructure. JT confirmed that this issue had been discussed with unions as the rate of pay is now unsustainably high and will end at the end of the year. All were clear that no further pay protection is possible or further saving would be required.

5 **Applications/Recruitment**

JC shared with members an updated report (copy in minute book). The figures were reviewed. Members raised queries on additional numbers required, the marketing campaigns in progress, conversion rates, retention to census day and internal progression. A member queried the comparison with previous years and the likelihood that the target number of applications would be reached. The potential impact of not reaching the target figure was noted and discussed. A member asked what was being done and by whom in the College in order to positively impact the process. JT confirmed that the marketing team were working on their own campaigns and with the external agencies to target potential applicants, that the upcoming shows and open days would be used to increase the number of applications and that the issue was reviewed weekly by the senior team. Members highlighted the need to do all possible to increase applications and discussed possible options for additional marketing opportunities. JT confirmed that an update on numbers and on the marketing campaigns would be taken to the next Board meeting. A member asked if staff were aware of the target, JT confirmed that this was clearly displayed on the staff home page. The Committee expressed their support for JT to continue to press the marketing team for regular reports and to ensure that all resources required were made available.

6. **Phase 5 Re-Structure**

JC confirmed that the consultation period had closed and that were now working through the responses received alongside the applications for next year, the curriculum plan and staffing requirements for 18/19. Members asked if the process was on track to achieve the level of savings required. JC advised that work was ongoing but it should be achieved. A member asked when the level of costs for the restructure would be confirmed, JC confirmed that this would be known within the next few weeks. Members queried in the HR had sufficient resource and robustness for the process, JC confirmed that they did.

7. **Banks Update**

The email received by Lloyds was reviewed (copy in minute book). JC confirmed that further clarity on the measures required was being sought. The need for a common approach from the banks was acknowledged.

8. **Land Sale**

The written update circulated with the meeting papers was reviewed. The Committee noted the direction of travel.

9. **Farm Accounts**

Discussion taken under Item 4 above

10. **AOB**

JT confirmed that the anticipated Minimum Standards Notice to Improve and Financial Health Notice to Improve (FNTI) letters have been received from the ESFA, members were provided with a copy (copy in the minute book). She confirmed that strategies and the required action plan were already in place to address the minimum standards issues. Members raised queries on the impact on provision. JT confirmed that courses highlighted could not be provided but that the College but emphasised the move to more access to HE courses. JT confirmed that work was ongoing with the ESFA in relation to both letters. MP confirmed that he was content to sign both letters and return to the ESFA as required, this would be noted at the next Board meeting as a Chair's Action.

Meeting closed at 10.07am