



The Henley College Corporation

MINUTES of the Special Meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee held on Monday 1 February 2021 at 17.00

<p>Members present: Charles Wiggin Chris Murray Satwant Deol James Lingard Trevor Watkins Vince Maltese</p> <p>In attendance: Eamonn Egan Ashok Patel Jacky Gearey</p>	<p>Independent Member and Chair Independent Member and Vice Chair Principal/Ex Officio Member Independent Member Independent Member/Chair of Corporation Independent Member</p> <p>Independent Member Finance Director Clerk</p>	
Agenda Item	Minutes	Action by
2.1	<p>Opening of meeting The meeting was opened at 17.18 due to technical issues.</p>	
2.2	<p>Apologies for Absence There were no apologies</p>	
2.3	<p>Declaration of Interests No interests were declared</p>	
2.4	<p>College Digitalisation Strategy The FD first clarified that this meeting was to agree the procurement process with the meeting of 8 March to make a decision on the preferred student record system (SRS). The committee was asked to consider the proposal to buy an integrated SRS as a replacement to the 10 year old system that has been repeatedly patched and is no longer reliable. The FD explained that as part of the on-going digitalisation enhancement of the College there has been concern about the performance of the current Unit-e system which was not functioning to the standards required. College staff were also frustrated with not being able to perform routine tasks, including monitoring, reporting of information/data. In addition there was also concern about the support received from the current vendor supplier/support for Unit-e and the spiralling cost of maintaining a system that is not fully responsive. FD advised that the initial cost could be expensive estimated to be around 60k-90k, with maintenance and support upgrades. The key outcomes from this review were expected to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek to review what systems are out in the market in other FE institutions and schools of comparable size • go to the market, via a quotation process, and review alternative systems with a limited number of vendors • secure a new SRS in readiness for the academic year 2021/22 <p>The FD emphasised that a delay in obtaining a replacement system increased the risks of a system's failure with spiralling maintenance costs plus the increased lack of staff confidence with the data.</p> <p>The FD said that the key recommendations were:</p> <p>(i) To approve the necessary review of the SRS</p>	



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	<p>(ii) To seek market assessment of VFM/cost/functionality and opportunities which exists in newer systems</p> <p>(iii) To approve the process as now presented to the committee</p> <p>(iv) F&R committee meeting on 8 March 2021 to approve recommendation from SLT following the procurement process</p> <p>The Chair said that although this was expensive, it had to be considered and asked the FD to identify three core issues on this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. getting rid of add-ons (sunk costs to the current supplier) ii. retain staff confidence iii. improved value for money with a new system linked ultimately to a better live dashboard. <p>Chair asked about the maintenance costs – FD said going forward it would be two thirds of the current costs.</p> <p>Chair looked at the proposed timescale and thought it might be tight and although the FD concurred, he reassured the committee that it could be done and that at Project Manager (PM) would be appointed to keep the project on track for completion at the beginning of the next academic year. If for whatever reason there was a delay, then it would be by December 2021. The committee felt that it might be beneficial to go with an established proven system and would Covid affect any implementation. FD agreed and that this would be looked at and in speaking to vendors he had been advised that Covid would have no impact on implementation. There were further questions raised about security and data protection with FD providing additional reassurance that these were part of the quotation process. In addition, the issue of on premise verses cloud base solution was discussed, in particular if cloud based then the data needed to be in the UK and that on site would mean hardware requirements. FD agreed and said that this was being specified in the procurement process.</p> <p>Committee advised that it was essential that as part of the quotation it was essential to be able to determine whether professional services as opposed to support services were being provided. FD said that the main element will be software and implementation costs but would ensure that this was taken into consideration.</p> <p>The FD also explained that as this is a capital expenditure it would be spread over several years but that the appointment of an external PM whose technical expertise was essential would be from operating costs. The committee approved the key recommendations above.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the College Digitalisation Strategy Report was received by the committee (ii) the committee approved the necessary review of the SRS (iii) the FD to seek market assessment of VFM/cost/functionality and opportunities which exists in newer systems (iv) the committee approved the procurement process as presented to the committee (v) the FD to provide a recommendation at the next F&R meeting 8 March 2021 following the procurement process 	<p style="text-align: center;">FD</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FD</p>
2.5	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	
2.6	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p>	



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	The next scheduled meeting is Monday 8 March 2021 at 09.00	
	Meeting Closure The meeting closed at 17.38	
	MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday 1 February 2021 were agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair. on	