

Minutes of the Charities and Trusts Committee Meeting held on 23 November 2016

Present: Brian Edwards (Chairman)

Attendance

Tim Corbett (Vice-Chairman) Ian Lawson
Peter Davies

Apologies: Sandra Hambleton

PART ONE

7. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

8. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 June 2016

RESOLVED – That, subject to paragraph 4 being amended with the correct spelling of Flash Ley School, the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

9. Property Update

The Committee were informed of the action approved by the Chairman since the last meeting of the Committee in respect of (i) a further six months extension to the use of the Chetwynd Centre by Flash Ley Primary School together with the plans for the pupils to move back to the school once the necessary remedial works have been completed; and (ii) the granting of a Tenancy at Will to enable Queen Elizabeth Mercian School (QEMS) to continue to use buildings on the site of Landau Forte whilst negotiations take place in relation to the terms for their continued use of the buildings.

The Committee also received a schedule and plans detailing the land and buildings for which the County Council had responsibility as a Trustee.

Mr. Lane indicated that he was attending the Committee's meeting in a personal capacity to give independent advice to Members on property matters and that he was not attending in his role as the Council's officer for Strategic Projects - Directorate Support. He sought the views of the Committee on the selection of the quotes which had been received from two marketing agents (Savills plc and Kingston Commercial Property Consultants) relating to the proposed disposal of the Chetwynd Centre. The Committee expressed the view that the quote submitted by Kingston Commercial Property Consultants provided better value for money and should therefore be accepted.

Mr Lane also sought the views of the Committee regarding the future of the buildings on the site of the Landau Forte Academy which were currently occupied by the (QEMS) under a Tenancy at Will. He indicated that QEMs were using two of the buildings on the site but that the third building (the former Grammar School) was not being used. As a

consequence of the former Grammar School not being maintained, its condition was deteriorating. Mr Lane sought the views of the Committee as to whether they wished to offer a long lease to QEMS for their continued occupation of the site of the Landau Forte Academy. He added that a long lease (25 years or longer) would enable the School to bid for Central Government Funding to enhance the buildings for use for educational purposes in line with the ambitions of the Charity Trust. The Committee expressed the view that QEMS should be offered a long term lease of the land and buildings at the Landau Forte Academy at a nominal sum.

Mr Lane indicated that he would bring a report to the next meeting of the Committee in relation to the status and future of the Alleyne's Grammar School site in Oulton Road, Stone.

RESOLVED – (a) That the actions approved by the Chairman since the last meeting of the Committee be noted.

(b) That the schedule and plans detailing the land and buildings for which the County Council had responsibility as a Trustee be received.

(c) That the quote submitted by Kingston Commercial Property Consultants in relation to marketing the proposed sale of the Chetwynd Centre be accepted.

(d) That QEMS be offered a long term lease of the land and buildings at the Landau Forte Academy for a nominal sum.

(e) That it be noted that a report will be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the status and future of the Alleyne's Grammar School site, Stone.

10. Stafford 14-19 Partnership: Business Plan 2016-2020 progress report

The Committee received a presentation from Maria Woodward and Phil Smith of the Stafford 14-19 Partnership together with a joint report of the Skills and Further Learning Manager and the Stafford 14-19 Partnership Manager on the progress of the Partnership's Business Plan 2016-2020.

The Committee were informed that the Stafford 14-19 Partnership Business Plan 2016-2020 was now within its second academic year of development. The revised Business Plan refreshed the four year objectives set out in the original Plan. It was noted that the Partnership structure had altered since the publication of the original Business Plan which had been presented to the Committee at their meeting on 5 February 2016. These changes included:

- Conversion of Blessed William Howard High School to a MAC (Holy Trinity Catholic Multi Academy Company) and Sir Graham Balfour High School to an Multi Academy Trust;
- Two headteachers of Partnership schools had also recently retired. Mrs Lesley Beck was appointed as the Headteacher of Sir Graham Balfour School and Mr Andrew Locke was the acting Principal of Weston Road Academy;

- Mr Stephen Smith recently retired from the position of Stafford Collegiate Manager; from September 2016 Mrs Maria Woodward took the post of Stafford 14-19 Partnership Manager;
- Flash Ley Primary school was expected to remain within the Chetwynd Centre until January 2017;
- The Chetwynd Centre was expected to be marketed for sale within the coming months.

For 2016-2017, there were 240 Year 12 students following 735 qualifications across the Partnership. In Year 13 there were 375 students following 1051 qualifications. Taking into account a smaller Y11 cohort from which to draw and the reforms at A-level this would appear to be a very positive position.

The majority of the Year 12 courses were now taught out of the Chetwynd Centre within the schools. Staff and students travelled between the schools to deliver a broad, balanced curriculum offer. Year-13 students continued to be taught within the schools and the Chetwynd Centre.

The Partnership schools were committed to working collaboratively to continue to improve delivery and progression through 14-19 education in Stafford.

Crucially the success of the Partnership would be reflected in the outcomes achieved by its students. Raising standards and expectations of all students for this year and the future was a key focus for all of the schools in the Partnership. The Schools had recently reviewed their target setting data procedures to use a system that provided challenging, aspirational targets based on robust data sets for students, that were available for teachers to inform their teaching from much earlier in the academic year than had recently been the case. The Partnership had signed up to the use of ALPS Post-16 reports for each of the high schools and this would support the rigorous quality assurance procedures that were embedded in the strategic working of the Partnership.

Both of the above-mentioned initiatives had been developed collaboratively thus also providing best value for money across all the schools within the Partnership.

Impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) had a been a significant feature within all the schools and Sixth-Form students had benefitted from visits to higher education fairs and local support had been provided by a range of Post-18 providers for students. On 18 November a joint enrichment visit to the World Skills Show at the NEC had taken place for all our Year-12 and Year-13 students offering them the opportunity to gain impartial careers advice, including on all routes into jobs, from apprenticeships to university.

With Committee noted that the Partnership had the following five objectives for year two:

- (i) Objective 1 - Ensuring financial sustainability;
 - Budgeting methodology was shared between the schools and managed centrally to ensure sharp, effective and robust use of funding.

- The Partnership had commenced the process of revisiting the funding mechanism and a working party had been developed to review this for the future.
- (ii) Objective 2 - Continuing outstanding delivery of level-3 courses, particularly A-Levels;
- Planning for 2017-2018 had begun with the development of the curriculum offer. Partners continued to agree the principle that minority subjects such as French would continue to be offered to maintain that broad, balanced offer for students of Stafford to opt-in to.
 - Initial enquiries had been made with the Education Trust Board of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
 - Opportunities for impartial IAG continued to be a focus for all schools, a further development of this was the introduction of the first Partnership wide enrichment day with a clear focus on IAG.
 - Centrally produced robust data was supporting the schools and teachers to focus on intervention strategies for students.
 - Structures had been put in place within all the schools to identify the key contacts for Looked after Children.
 - Procedures were in place for the sharing of information to enable students with additional needs support strategies to be identified with the specific teachers of the groups that they were in.
- (iii) Objective 3 - Transferring expertise to successful expansion into level-3 courses and level-2 access courses (bridging between GCSE & A-Level);
- Discussions had begun in schools regarding the KS4 curriculum offer. Developments such as the inclusion of Further Maths GCSE remained a focus for the schools with the view to providing increased opportunities for pathways in to KS5.
 - The curriculum offer had developed to include two pathways that would provide opportunities for students within the Partnership to begin a KS5 programme that fitted their learning and future career needs.
 - Opportunities for subject challenges/competitions were shared with the partner schools.
 - Opportunities were available for schools to attend PiXL Subject conferences.
- (iv) Objective 4 - Building collaboration into 14-16 provision to deliver cross town GCSE or Level-3 courses for Gifted and Talented students and skills based courses that could lead to apprenticeships;
- Initial enquiries had been made with the Education Trust Board of the LEP with the view to directly linking with local employers to address local skills needs.
 - Opportunities for impartial IAG continued to be a focus for all schools, a further development of this was introduction of the first Partnership wide enrichment day with a clear focus on IAG.
 - Schools were working together to develop Post-16 options evenings and to promote these within the Partnership schools to provide IAG for students and parents about the next stage of the education journey.
 - Plans were in place to develop an on-line summer transition programme of work to prepare KS4 students for the rigour and demands of KS5 studies.

- (v) Objective 5 - Develop further systems for Quality Assurance;
- All schools had planned Post-16 information evenings for students to gain IAG on the next step of their career.
 - The Partnership had signed up to using ALPS as a way of monitoring performance across all subjects within the Partnership and across individual schools. Thus supporting individual school performance and Partnership performance.
 - Quality assurance discussions had formed a part of each of the Partnership meeting agendas.
 - All schools monitored and undertook in-depth analysis of internal data to ensure that an underperformance of students was addressed rapidly and meticulously.

The Committee were also informed of the intended next steps for the Partnership which included:

- To source and relocate the core administrative team within the Partnership to a suitable location with a full cost analysis of this.
- To confirm the employment status of all the staff associated with the Chetwynd Centre.
- The development of a new funding mechanism for the Partnership with a key focus on a strong collaborative offer that met the needs of the young people and local employers.
- To continue to develop relationships with other education providers to ensure that there was a quality offer and high expectations of all students.
- To submit a formal bid for funding through the Charities and Trusts Committee.

Maria Woodward and Phil Smith also extended an invitation to the Trustees to talk to members of the Partnership committees to inform them of any projects that they could be working with to help improve the educational outcomes for students and in turn their life chances to become active and engaged citizens of Staffordshire.

In response to a question from Mr Davies in relation to whether the reference to “Stafford” in the Charity’s purpose related to the Borough of Stafford or just to the Town, Michelle Rowe, on behalf of the Director of Strategy, Governance and Change, undertook to investigate this matter and to report back to Members in due course.

RESOLVED – (a) That the progress report of the Stafford 14-19 Partnership Business Plan 2016-2020 be received.

(b) That the allocation and release of funds up to a total of £90,400 for the 2016/17 academic year (which was approved by the Trustees at their meeting on 5 February 2016) be noted; that the estimated total of £83,505 (the indicative contribution figure for the 2017/18 academic year) be approved subject to the refreshed Business Plan being presented to the Committee in February 2017; and that it be noted that the approved allocation of funds is currently being reviewed based on the current 2016/17 delivery and the associated developments relating to the disposal of the Chetwynd Centre. Note: These contributions will be sourced from the charitable income, (interest from the

capital investment of the permanent endowment), from the Staffordshire Education Centre Charity (registered number 528604).

(c) That, subject to the final Business Plan not containing any major changes to the draft Business Plan considered by the Committee, the Council's County Commissioner for Skills and Employability be authorised to approve the release of funds as set out in (b) above.

(d) That, in the event of major changes to the Business Plan being required, the matter be brought back to the Committee for further consideration prior to the release of funds referred to in (b) and (c) above.

(e) That the invitation from the Stafford 14-19 Partnership to talk to members of the Partnership committees be noted.

11. Investment Considerations

The Committee received a presentation by Elizabeth Carter, Client Relationship Manager, at CCLA Investment Management Ltd ("CCLA" - Churches, Charities and Local Authorities) on the considerations to be taken into account when investing Charity Funds.

The presentation covered a range of matters including:

- The prioritisation of risks
- Stewardship - Matching reserves to spending
- Why hold cash
- How to protect the Charity from the risks
- The opportunity cost of cash
- Long Term Investments
- Fixed income - Why hold bonds?
- Equities (shares) - Why hold equities?
- Property - Why hold property?
- Accessing investments- merits of Pooled funds
- CCLA pooled fund range for Charities
- COIF Charities Investment Fund
- COIF Charities Deposit Fund

RESOLVED – That Elizabeth Carter be thanked for her presentation.

12. Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of Local Government Act 1972 indicated below.

PART TWO

The Committee then proceeded to consider a report on the following matter:

13. Investment of Endowment Charity Funds
(Exemption paragraph 3)

Chairman