

**THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN  
TRINITY COLLEGE**

The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 16th February 2005

PRESENT: The Bursar (in the Chair), Dr L. Doyle, Professor D. Weaire\*, Mr F. Kieran, the Dean of Arts (Letters), the Senior Lecturer, the Secretary, the Treasurer (Secretary of the Finance Committee)

IN  
ATTENDANCE: Deputy Treasurer

APOLOGIES The Provost, The Registrar

(PRESENT FOR) \*Minute FN/04-05/48

The Minutes of the Meeting of 12th January 2005 were approved and signed.

**Section A**

**No Items**

**Section B**

**FN/04- 05/48 Recurrent Income and Expenditure Estimates – 2005**

The Committee considered a memorandum and attachments as circulated from the Deputy Treasurer dated 09.02.2005 which included HEA correspondence dated 20.12.2004 indicating a provisional grant allocation for 2005, the basis of the preparation of the 2005 Estimates approved by Executive Officers in November 2004, Estimates of Recurrent Income and Expenditure with explanatory notes for 2005 and high level estimates of income and expenditure for 2006. The Committee was invited to consider the Recurrent Estimates of Income and Expenditure in the context of its role in the estimates process as set out in the Terms of Reference approved by Board on 10.11.2004.

The Treasurer briefed the Committee on the sectoral increases in grants and outlined the extent of the shortfall vis à vis the level of funding required to continue providing current levels of service. The briefing also outlined the method of allocation of the overall third level state grant between tuition fees, other priority items and state grant (including unit cost adjustments). The Committee noted the consequences of these allocation mechanisms for state grant in the context of potential increases in undergraduate student numbers across the sector and the possibility that priority items may increase over time. The Committee was briefed on once-off circumstances which facilitate the availability of funds for the College's current proposals in relation to change and noted that any additional buoyancy that might arise during the year would be added to this fund.

Following consideration of estimates-related policies previously considered and re-confirmed by Executive Officers and the risk issues associated with the income and expenditure estimates as presented, the Committee:

- confirmed the policy basis on which the estimates had been prepared.

- noted and accepted the analysis of the risk exposure/issues associated with the outcomes of the estimates decisions. The Committee however expressed its very strong concern in relation to the potential obligations arising for core and research sponsor funded activities under the Fixed Term Workers Act 2003. The Committee requested a report on progress on this matter for its next meeting in the context of sectoral meetings with the HEA and Department of Education and Science in the coming days. The Committee also requested that research principal investigators be notified as a matter of urgency of these obligations and the need for the relevant grants to make provision for their related liability given the College's lack of capacity to address research liabilities of this magnitude from the College's core resources.
- noted that as the College is planning a deficit the Provost as Accounting Officer on behalf of the College will, under Section 37 of the Universities Act 1997 be required to inform the HEA of the planned deficit and specify/outline plans for dealing with the deficit.
- Considered and endorsed the high level Estimates of Recurrent Income and Expenditure for 2006 in the context of the policy and risk issues set out.

Arising from clarification of the long-standing HEA arrangements for the approval, notification and treatment of targeted funding Mr F. Kieran expressed concerns in relation to lack of stability afforded for initiatives initiated under one year Targeted Funding approvals particularly in relation to initiatives in the Student Services area. The Committee noted the concerns but recognised the College's inability to provide any certainty in this regard given the current HEA process associated with targeted initiatives and significant competing core and targeted initiative (with reduced approved funding) demands currently arising in a very difficult financial environment.

The Committee noted that the Estimates would be submitted to the HEA subject to Board approval at its next meeting.

#### Actions

- 48.1 The College Secretary to report to the Committee on the progress on Fixed Term Workers Act 2003 obligations at its next meeting.
- 48.2 The Staff Office be requested by the Secretary to notify Principal Investigators of Fixed Term Workers Act obligations and the need for relevant grants to make provision for their related liability.

#### **FN/04-05/49 Quarterly Accounts to 31 December 2004**

The Deputy Treasurer presented the Quarterly Accounts as circulated on a high level basis as previously agreed by the Committee.

Capital Projects funded by HEA Capital Grants  
 Capital Projects not funded by the HEA  
 Faculty and Departments  
 Administrative and Other Areas Non Pay Budgets  
 Service Departments  
   Library  
   IS Services  
   Bio-resources Unit  
   Audio Visual and Media Services  
   Centre for Microscopy Analysis  
   Buildings Office  
   Student Health Service  
   Counselling

Subsidiary Activities  
 Residential Rooms – College  
 Residential Rooms – Trinity Hall  
 Catering  
 Library Shop  
 Copying Service  
 Diagnostic Services  
 College Day Nursery  
 Innovation Services  
 Enterprise Centre  
 Department of Sport  
 High Performance Computing

The Treasurer indicated the Research Quarterly Accounts could not be brought to the meeting because of resourcing issues caused by illness but would be brought to the next meeting for review.

**FN/04-05/50 Taxation – Benefit in Kind**  
 (Minute 2004/62 of 6.02.2004 refers)

The Committee having considered a memorandum from Mr M Ryan (Procurements and Payments Manager) and Mr M Kiely (Administrative Officer -Taxation) dated 01.02.2005, a note of a meeting of CHIU Finance Officers on 13.01.2005 and Revenue Commissioners correspondence dated 20.12.2004 as circulated, approved the administration and collection of PAYE/PRSI on Benefits in Kind on the College's Fee Remission Scheme applicable to spouses and children of staff. The Committee noted in particular that the tax liability is determined on the basis of whether or not a displacement occurs when a child or spouse accepts a place on a course.

**FN/04-05/51 Student Fees - 2005/06**

The Committee noted a memorandum and attached schedules from Ms J. Byrne (Financial Resources Manager) dated 02.02.2005 setting out issues to be considered in relation to the setting of EU and non-EU postgraduate fees and other non-EU fees for the academic year 2005/2006. The Committee noted that the level of fee increase required based on known cost increases had been calculated in the normal way, the Irish Universities Medical Consortium had identified the sectorally agreed fee level for 2005/06 and the normal consultation had taken place with the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Registrar and Heads of Departments/Course Directors in relation to self-financing course fee levels. In the context of the advices of the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Registrar and the transition towards the introduction of an Academic Resources Allocation Model (ARAM) and in the knowledge that cost increases would demand a fee increase of 10% the Committee decided on a 5% increase in fees for 2005/06. Mr F. Kieran requested to be recorded as dissenting from this recommendation.

**FN/04-05/52 Procurement – Travel Agency Services**

A memorandum dated 04.02.2005 from the Procurement and Contracts Officer and the Procurement - Senior Buyer in relation to the procurement of travel agency services had been circulated to the Committee. The memorandum outlined the background to the need for undertaking the procurement process to identify exclusive travel agency services to the College, the process of seeking proposals, the review of tenders, the results of the tendering process and associated recommendations, the benefits of the tendering process and the next steps to be undertaken to put proposals into action. The Committee addressed the need for the process in order to maximise value for money, the overview of costs associated with the arrangement of travel (including the travel cost, the processing costs associated with the transaction and the academic time invested in making the travel arrangements), concerns associated with "low fare" availability and the obligations of the College in relation to the application of EU procurement regulations.

Given a declared conflict of interest Mr F. Kieran withdrew from the meeting during the discussion of the principles and rejoined the meeting for the decision.

Following a long and detailed discussion the Committee recommends:

1. The appointment of the World Travel Centre (WTC) and the Dublin University Student Travel (DUST) as the College's exclusive suppliers on the following basis:
  - a one year contract, renewable annually up to a maximum of 4 years.
  - the travel agents are to develop a customised College travel portal enabling online ordering and payment.
2. That the College community utilise the online College portal of the appointed agents, as it can present all fares available, including those of the low cost carriers in one location for easy comparison while still retaining the benefits of streamlining the College's booking through exclusive suppliers (i.e. route deals, group discounts, consolidated invoicing, online approval etc.).

These recommendations are made subject to review by Dr Doyle (on behalf of the Committee and as Board representative) with the Procurement and Contracts Officer, of the details of the proposal particularly in relation to the provision of low cost fare options.

In the context of the need for the College community to engage fully with the exclusive arrangements to be put in place by the recommended agents the Committee further recommends that where:

- an invoice is presented in the College's name for payment to a travel agent other than those recommended that a surcharge of 50% will be applied.
- airline costs are submitted a reimbursement in an individual's name based on a travel supplier other than those recommended that the amount of the reimbursement will be reduced by 50%.

While Professor Weaire was unable to attend for this item email correspondence addressed to the Deputy Treasurer dated 16.02.2005 (with further correspondence to the Provost and the Senior Lecturer) was read in full to the meeting outlining his objections to the exclusivity aspect. Prof. Weaire requested that he be recorded as dissenting from the above recommendations.

#### Action

- 52.1 The Treasurer's Office will facilitate a review by Dr L. Doyle of details associated with the proposed travel agency services proposals.

### **Section C**

#### **FN/04-05/53 Service Charge for Campus Companies – 2005/2006**

The Committee approved a memorandum from the Procurements and Payments Manager dated 01.02.2005 as circulated proposing a service charge for campus companies for 2005/06 of €81 per square metre which had been calculated on a similar basis to previous years taking account of major expenditure under the Premises heading in the College's Financial Statements and determining a cost per square metre.

**FN/04-05/54 Self Financing Courses**

The Committee noted and approved a memorandum from Mr A Malone dated 04.02.2005 as circulated in relation to the Postgraduate Diploma in Community Pharmacy proposing a change to the income structure that would be cost neutral to the course.

**FN/04-05/55 Annual Report**

The Committee noted that the annual report from the Business and Industry Committee for 2004/05 was not yet available and agreed to that the report should be brought to a future meeting.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee has been arranged for 30th March 2005 at **2.00 pm**, in the Board Room.

PROVOST.....

DATE.....

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