

**THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE**

The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 1 October 2008

PRESENT: Provost (in the Chair), Bursar, Vice Provost-Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Registrar, Professor D. Singleton, Professor M. Marsh, Ms. P. Murphy, Mr. C. Reilly, Treasurer (Acting) – Secretary of the Committee

IN
ATTENDANCE: Research Accounting Manager

APOLOGIES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 27 June 2008 were approved and signed.

The Provost welcomed the Vice Provost-Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Mr C. Reilly and Professor D. Singleton as new members of the Finance Committee.

Section A

No Items

Section B

FN/08 – 09/01 Funding Outlook 2009 and Beyond

The Committee had been circulated with
(a) correspondence from HEA dated 31.07.2008 and
(b) correspondence from IUA to HEA dated 4.08.2008

The Provost outlined for the Committee the outcome of the meeting held between the Heads of the University Sector and the Minister for Education on 24.09.2008 which confirmed that there would be a significant reduction in the core funding allocation in 2009 for the sector and the funding outlook beyond 2009 was poor. In addition, given the pressure on public finances, funding in relation to PRTL Cycle V and the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) was now under review. The Committee noted that a forensic audit was to be carried out by the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office which would commence over the coming months focussing on value for money across all areas of the University sector.

FN/08 – 09/02 Pensions Update

(Minute FN/07 – 08/70 of 27.06.2008 refers)
The Director of Strategic Initiatives attended for this item.

The Director of Strategic Initiatives advised the Committee of the background to the issues associated with pensions and the discussions currently underway at a senior level with officials of the Department of Finance, Department of Education and Science, HEA (Chair), and IUA.

The Committee noted:

- the requirement of the Governing Authorities and Trustees (where they exist) to agree to the proposal that the Government take over the assets and liabilities of existing pension funds in return for an appropriate guarantee regarding the entitlements of individual members
- that the issues surrounding the relevant guarantees are now being considered
- that Primary Legislation is currently being drafted and will cover a number of aspects (date of transfer to State; rules of schemes in relation to benefits no less favourable than prior to transfer; Trustee responsibilities and the appeals mechanisms). It is expected that the sector will have input to this process.

The Director also outlined to the Committee that the view of the Government representatives, based on advice of the Attorney General, is that the agreement of the schemes' members is not required however consistent communication across the sector to reassure members and their representatives on the process was necessary. Furthermore the Committee noted that documentation requested by the Department of Education and Science and Department of Finance relating to all pension arrangements in College had previously been provided to the HEA.

The Committee noted that the Board had recently approved the appointment of the Treasurer (Acting) as a Trustee of the College's Pension Scheme in place of the former Treasurer Ms. Grace Dempsey who had stepped down in her role as Trustee and expressed its gratitude to her for her long service and valuable contribution. The Committee was advised that as a result of the progress to date in relation to pensions, finalisation of the Consolidated Accounts for the years 2005/06 and 2006/07 could be achieved in Michaelmas Term 2008.

The Provost thanked the Director for the concise briefing on the issue and invited him to update the Committee on progress in this regard as required.

Action:

- 2.1 The Director of Strategic Initiatives to update the Committee on progress associated with Pensions as required.

FN/08 – 09/03 Risk Assessment 2008 – Finance

The Committee was circulated with a memorandum dated 24.09.2008 and accompanying schedules from the Treasurer (Acting) outlining the Treasurer's Office Risk Assessment for 2008. The Treasurer (Acting) advised the Committee that the risk assessment report is produced annually and had been prepared in accordance with the College's Risk Management Policy.

Subject to minor amendments, the Committee accepted the strategic and operational high risks and approved the Treasurer's Office Risk Assessment 2008 Report for inclusion in the College's overall Annual Risk Process.

Action:

- 3.1 The Treasurer (Acting) to forward the Treasurer's Office Risk Assessment 2008 Report to the Chief Operating Officer for inclusion in the College's overall Annual Risk Process.

FN/08 – 09/04 Trust Funds Financial Statements for the year ended 30.06.2008

The Committee had been circulated with a copy of the Financial Statements of the Trust Funds (Benefactions) for the year ended 30.06.2008 together with KPMG's draft letter of representation. The Committee, noting that it was the intention of the Auditors to issue an unqualified audit opinion recommended the approval of the Financial Statements by Board.

Action:

- 4.1 The Trust Funds Financial Statements to be considered by the Board at its meeting of 22 October 2008.

FN/08 – 09/05 International Office – Report

(Minute FN/06-07/86 of 27.06.2007 refers)

The Director of the International Office attended for this item.

The Treasurer (Acting) tabled the previous Finance Committee Minute (FC FN/06 – 07/86) along with the original paper submitted by the Director of the International Office supporting a request for an increased budget allocation for the planned growth in international Non EU student numbers. The Director also tabled supplementary information to support his circulated report and gave a presentation on the information contained therein focusing in particular on the assumptions supporting the modified projections and the various internal and external factors that had influenced the figures.

The Committee was concerned to note the sizeable decline in the revised projections and requested the Vice Provost-Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Operating Officer to consider Non EU student targets with the Director of the International Office. It was recognised that the Faculty Deans' involvement in this process was particularly important in terms of maintaining targets particularly as internationalisation plays a significant role as part of the overall strategy of the College.

Action:

- 5.1 The Vice Provost-Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Operating Officer to consider Non EU student targets with the Director of the International Office in conjunction with the Faculty Deans.

FN/08 – 09/06 Banking Arrangements

In the context of the present crisis in the current financial markets, the Treasurer (Acting) briefed the Committee on the financial institutions with which it currently holds funds on deposit.

FN/08 – 09/07 An Post Site/Biosciences Development

(Minute FN/07-08/64 of 26.05.2008 refers)

The Treasurer (Acting) informed the Committee that the Board of the European Investment Bank had approved the borrowing facility of €75M for the An Post Site/Biosciences Building. The Provost thanked the Treasurer (Acting) for his role in this significant development for College.

Section C

FN/08 – 09/08 Student Fees and Other Charges – 2008/09

The Committee noted and approved the following as circulated –

- (i) Correspondence from the HEA dated 7.08.2008 advising the increase of 2.6% undergraduate tuition fee for 2008/09 and also the increase in the student registration fee from €825 to €900 which, according to the HEA, will bring the amount contributed by the students more into line with the cost of providing these services. The Committee noted the reduction in the 2008 calendar block grant corresponding to 75% of the increase in the student charge.
- (ii) A memorandum setting out the proposed Student Fees and Other Charges for 2008/09 from the Financial Operations Manager dated 19.09.2008.

FN/08 – 09/09 Quarterly Accounts to 30 June 2008

The Committee received a memorandum dated 24.09.2008 with accompanying Quarterly Accounts schedules for the period to 30.06.2008 from the Financial Resources Manager and the Research Accounting Manager. The Committee noted the movements, levels and trends in reserves/balances and actions being undertaken in the areas of Capital Projects, Academic Faculties and Schools, Administration, Service Activities, Subsidiary Activities and Research.

FN/08 – 09/10 Minutes of Sub-Committees

The Committee noted and approved the minutes of the following Sub-Committees as circulated -

- (i) Investment Committee meeting of 18.09.2008, noting the Committee had considered the issues with regard to Ethical Investments in more detail as requested and the decisions arising therefrom.
- (ii) ARAM Taskforce meeting of 11.07.2008 noting in particular the successful awardee of the contract for the "Strategic Planning and Budgeting Version of ARAM".

FN/08 – 09/11 Haughton Institute

The Committee noted and approved the Financial Statements for the Haughton Institute for year ended 31.12.2007 as circulated.

FN/08 – 09/12 DMMC

The Committee noted and approved the Directors Report and Financial Statements for year ended 30.09.2007 as circulated.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee has been arranged for **Monday** 17 November 2008 at 2.30 pm, in the Board Room.

PROVOST.....

DATE.....

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