



The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 13 April 2010

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Research Accounting Manager

APOLOGIES: Provost, Bursar, Mr. Cónán O'Broin

The Minutes of the Meeting of 19 March 2010 were approved and signed.

Section A

No Items

Section B

FN/09 – 10/64 Procurement

(Minute FN/09-10/44 of 24.02.2010 refers)

The Treasurer updated the Committee on the recent Board approved procurement policy and outlined the commitment of the Treasurer's Office to deliver a comprehensive communication strategy for the new policy across College. The Treasurer assured the Committee that, while initial communication had commenced, a more extensive communication exercise would be carried out in advance of the introduction of the new policy in Hilary Term.

The Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer indicated that the Fellows of the College intend to invite the Treasurer to a future meeting to outline the current financial position along with the College's procurement vision.

FN/09 – 10/65 Research and Related Accounts

The Head of School of Medicine/Vice Provost for Medical Affairs attended for item (i).

The Principal Investigator and his Financial Administrator attended for item (ii).

(Minute FN/09-10/48 of 24.02.2010 refers)

- (i) The Treasurer, outlining the background to the issues associated with the group of accounts under review, advised the Committee that the School, Faculty Financial Advisor and the Treasurer's Office continued to work closely together to address the issues in the continuing absence of the P.I. The Committee noted the risks associated with the lack of commitment accounting and a purchase-to-pay system in the College, which in this case, had exacerbated the situation.

Presenting his circulated memorandum dated 26.03.2010; the Head of School of Medicine/Vice Provost for Medical Affairs, highlighting the absence of key functionality in the College's accounting system, advised the Committee of the steps taken by the School and the Treasurer's Office to identify the full extent of the overall deficit along with the measures taken to date that have been incorporated into the School's plan to clear the deficit within a specified timeframe.

The Committee observed that whilst the P.I. in question is no longer a member of

College staff, the suite of research contracts and associated exposures are the responsibility of the College. In this context, the Committee recommended that the Head of School/Vice Provost for Medical Affairs would, in future, jointly hold all research accounts with the P.I. The Committee also requested that the Staff Office engage with St. James's Hospital Human Resources in order to progress matters relating to the P.I. The Treasurer proposed and the Committee agreed that the matter be reviewed in Trinity Term 2011. The Committee in welcoming the progress to date, recommended that the deficit should be cleared in the shortest possible timeframe, but in any event, no longer than a four year period.

- (ii) The Treasurer outlined the background to this complex group of accounts noting that the financial plan as presented enabled full visibility in relation to the issues arising. At the Committee's invitation, the P.I., outlining the detail of the financial plan set out in the circulated memorandum dated 31.03.2010, advised that the financial models included potential funding streams, which may arise as a result of recent research funding applications to various funding agencies. The Committee noted that the plan outlined a series of pay cost reductions to commence in April 2010 should the funding not materialise as planned. In this context, the Committee agreed that the P.I. should provide the Treasurer's Office with regular updates in relation to the outcome of the funding applications, so that the default position regarding the reduction of pay expenditure could be implemented as planned, if necessary.

Action:

- 65.1 The School and the Treasurer's Office to agree a schedule of repayments to clear the deficit as soon as possible but in any event no longer than a four year period
- 65.2 Where appropriate, the Head of School of Medicine/Vice Provost for Medical Affairs and the P.I. to hold research accounts in joint names in the future
- 65.3 The Staff Office to engage with St. James's Hospital Human Resources in order to progress matters relating to the P.I.
- 65.4 The Head of School of Medicine/Vice Provost for Medical Affairs to report to the Committee in Trinity Term 2011
- 65.5 The P.I. to provide regular updates to the Treasurer's Office on the outcome of all research funding applications and, in the absence of adequate notice by the P.I., the default position concerning the reduction in pay expenditure will be managed by the Faculty and School with appropriate support from the Staff Office and the Treasurer's Office

FN/09 – 10/66 TCIN

The Director of TCIN and the TCIN Accountant attended for this item.

The Director of TCIN outlined the current issues facing TCIN and in particular the current uncertainty surrounding future funding from a major research sponsor. The Committee considered the two funding scenarios as described in the circulated memorandum dated 30.03.2010 and noted that pay cost reductions would be required in the future should funding streams not materialise/discontinue.

The Committee, in reviewing TCIN's financial plans as outlined:

- confirmed that the existing arrangements would remain in respect of the allocation of indirect costs associated with a particular research grant
- approved an extension to the repayment schedule associated with the MRI installation deficit for a further two years until 2014
- requested that TCIN liaise with the Treasurer's Office in relation to funding streams and associated staffing issues and report to the Committee in Michaelmas Term 2010

Action:

- 66.1 TCIN to liaise closely with the Treasurer's Office in relation to funding streams and associated staffing issues and report to the Committee in Michaelmas Term 2010

FN/09 – 10/67 Residential Rent Review 2010/11

The Director of Accommodation & Catering Services attended for this item.

The Director of Accommodation and Catering Services briefed the Committee on the circulated memorandum dated 23.03.2010, which outlined the financial situation regarding the residential accounts, as well as cost considerations for the coming year. He also outlined for the Committee:

- the financial impact of semesterisation on 2009/10 income streams
- issues associated with potential loss of income in relation to early departures from residences and related discussions with the interim Chief Operating Officer to ensure that contractual terms are adhered to
- the proposal to eliminate the price differential between Trinity Hall and Campus accommodation

The Committee, noting the issues outlined by the Director of Accommodation & Catering and in particular the ongoing need to provide for adequate sinking funds for refurbishment, approved a 0% increase in rental prices for 2010/2011.

Section C

FN/09 – 10/68 Quarterly Accounts to 31 December 2009

The Committee noted and approved the memorandum with accompanying Quarterly Account schedule for the period to 31.12.2009 from the Financial Accountant and Deputy Research Accounting Manager dated 06.04.2010 as circulated.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee has been arranged for 10 May 2010 at 11.00a.m. in the Board Room.

PROVOST.....

DATE.....