



Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 13 June 2012

PRESENT: Provost, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Bursar, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Prof. David Singleton, Mr. Ryan Bartlett, Treasurer – Secretary of the Committee.

IN

ATTENDANCE: Research Accounting Manager

APOLOGIES: Chief Operating Officer, Registrar, Ms. Helen Keelan

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 16 May 2012 were approved and signed.

The Committee noted the circulated Finance Committee Action List as at June 2012 and the report on the status of open actions provided by the Treasurer. Updated action points are minuted separately below (minutes FN/11-12/97 and FN/11-12/98 refer).

Section A

FN/11 - 12/94 Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute

The Deputy Academic Director of TBSI (Head of the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences) and the Executive & Technical Director of TBSI attended for this item.

The Committee, welcoming the Deputy Academic Director and the Executive and Technical Director of Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute (TBSI), considered the detailed proposal from the Academic Director of the TBSI dated 24.05.2012, regarding Trinity Research Institute status, noting that it had been considered and approved by Research Committee at its meeting of 29.05.2012.

The plan for TBSI set out three primary objectives as follows:

- i) To deliver on the PRTL Cycle 4 TCDBIOMED programme
- ii) To establish TBSI as an Institute of international stature and visibility
- iii) To exploit the opportunity for interdisciplinary research

In considering the financial plan to support the above objectives, the Committee noted the budget assumptions, the income streams and costs, along with the risk assessment as outlined in the circulated document. Having noted the initial level of investment required from the College and the associated repayment plan, the Committee requested that should the Institute generate funding in excess of the projections, repayments would be accelerated.

The Committee approved the proposal as presented for onward consideration by Board on the basis of TBSI's potential to support the College's strategic objectives in relation to research as well as to enhance the College's reputation for excellence.

Action

94.1 The Committee approved the financial plan for TBSI, including the initial level of investment from and the associated repayment plan, and recommended it for onward consideration by Board.

94.2 Should the Institute generate funding in excess of the projections, repayment of the College's investment would be accelerated.

FN/11 - 12/95 GeneSIS System Implementation – Policy Changes

The Financial Planning Manager attended for this item.

The Committee considered the circulated memorandum from the Financial Planning Manager dated 07.06.2012, which sought approval for the automation/streamlining of existing processes and associated changes to College policy and regulations arising from the implementation of the new GeneSIS system in relation to:

- Late Registration Charges
- Withdrawal of Unregistered Students
- Two Instalment Payments for Non-EU Students.

Noting the potential efficiencies as outlined, the Committee approved the proposals (as attached to these minutes) with effect from the 2012/13 academic year and recommended them for noting by Board.

Action

95.1 The Committee recommended to Board the proposed automation/streamlining of processes and related amendments to College policy/regulations arising from the implementation of the new GeneSIS system.

FN/11 - 12/96 eStrategy – Financial Information System (FIS) Proposal

The FIS Project Manager attended for this item.

The Committee considered the circulated document, entitled “Board Proposal for Provision of an Enterprise-wide Financial Information System”, from the Treasurer and the FIS Project Manager dated 06.06.2012, noting that it had previously been considered and approved by the FIS Steering Group and Executive Officers at their respective meetings on 21.05.2012.

Mr. Naughton invited the Committee’s attention to the proposal by way of presentation, advising the Committee that since November 2010 the FIS Project Team had defined the College’s requirements, initiated the supplier selection process, completed the solution evaluations and made a recommendation to Board within the agreed milestones and the approved budget. The Committee noted the shortcomings of the current system, the benefits of an enterprise-wide FIS and the associated vision for the project. It was also noted that Quality Assurance will be provided on the project and, furthermore, that the project is being run through the IS Services Project Management Office.

The Committee considered in detail the investment required to implement a new FIS, the benefits across the College, including increased automation, elimination of paperwork and manual interventions, reduced transaction costs and cycle time with associated release of College-wide staff time and the return on investment. The Committee agreed that the full support and active participation of all areas in College would be essential in order to fully achieve the benefits outlined. The Committee noted that, following a competitive dialogue tender process, the Oracle E-Business suite as proposed by Patech and Oracle is the preferred software solution with the former being the implementation partner.

Having considered the total investment required to deliver the proposed solution, along with the total annual costs and associated risks, and noting the non-Exchequer source of funding and the implementation strategy, the Committee approved the financial elements of the proposal as presented for onward consideration and final approval by Board.

Action

96.1 The Committee approved the financial elements of the FIS proposal as presented for onward consideration and final approval by Board.

FN/11 - 12/97 Medical School Loan
(Minute FN/11-12/11.1 of 02.11.2011 refers)

The Committee requested the Treasurer to liaise with the Head of School of Medicine to finalise a repayment schedule for the outstanding loan or, if appropriate, to make alternative arrangements to resolve this matter.

Action

97.1 The Treasurer to liaise with the Head of School of Medicine to finalise a repayment schedule for the outstanding loan or, if appropriate, to make alternative arrangements to resolve this matter.

FN/11 - 12/98 Residential Rent Review
(Minute FN/10-11/62.3 of 13.04.11 refers)

The Committee agreed to the proposal from the Treasurer that there would be no change to the current arrangements and furthermore agreed to review the position in Trinity Term 2013.

Action

98.1 Residential rent arrangements to be reviewed again in Trinity Term 2013.

FN/11 – 12/99 Financial Update 2012-2017
(FN/11-12/58 of 27.01.2012 refers)

The Committee considered in detail the revised financial update for the period 2012-2017, including various scenarios, as set out in the circulated memorandum from the Treasurer dated 6.06.2012. In considering the assumptions on which the scenarios provided were based, the Committee noted that to achieve a breakeven position in 2011/12 and 2012/13, the College would be required to utilise its financial flexibility as previously identified, and agreed that future iterations of the forecast graph should exclude this support to show the underlying financial position. The Committee further noted that the Planning Group will use this financial scenario tool to inform future decision making. In considering the College's projected financial position, the Provost stressed the importance of finalising the College's Commercialisation Strategy in order to maximise the return on the College's assets.

Action

99.1 Future iterations of the financial forecast graph to exclude the financial flexibility required to achieve a breakeven position in 2011/12 and 2012/13.

FN/11 - 12/100 Loyola Institute
(Minute FN/09-10/26 of 16.12.2010 refers)
The Financial Planning Manager and former Director of Strategic Initiatives attended for this item.

The Committee welcomed the memorandum from the Registrar and former Director of Strategic Initiatives dated 07.06.2012, setting out the detailed financial arrangements in respect of the Loyola Institute, noting that the legal arrangements associated with the Institute had previously been considered by Board at its meeting of 30.05.2012.

In considering the 10-year financial forecasts as set out, the Committee noted the improved projections over the period since the figures were last considered in December 2010. Further to a discussion on the financial assumptions and the associated risks, the former Director of Strategic Initiatives briefed the Committee on exit arrangements for both parties, should they be required in the future. In approving the financial arrangements in broad terms, the Committee requested the Provost, Treasurer, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Science and Financial Planning Manager, to engage with the Registrar and former Director of Strategic Initiatives to review the income required to support the planned activity, with the outcome to be reported at the next Board meeting.

Action

- 100.1** The financial arrangements associated with the Loyola Institute were approved in broad terms, subject to a review by a sub-group of the Committee of the income required to support the planned activity, with the outcome to be reported at the next Board meeting

FN/11 - 12/101 CRANN

(Minute FN/11-12/39 of 14.12.2011 refers)

The Committee, having been circulated with a report and related appendices from the Executive Director of CRANN dated May 2011, considered the overview of the current financial position of CRANN, noting in particular the dependency on funding from a specific sponsor. It was further noted that CRANN is currently in competition for SFI centre funding and the Committee, having considered in detail the scenarios setting out its financial sustainability based on the success or otherwise of the bid, noted the level of strategic funding required to support the Institute's projected level of expenditure.

Whilst acknowledging CRANN's competitive position in terms of its SFI centre bid, the Committee expressed concern at the projected level of financial support required should the bid be unsuccessful. In this context, and noting that strategic support to TRI's would in future be based on the submission of a comprehensive business case, the Committee requested CRANN to bring forward detailed plans regarding the diversification of its income at the next meeting of the Committee in September 2012.

The Director of CRANN was also invited to provide an update to the Committee in Michaelmas Term 2012 in accordance with College policy on TRIs.

Action

- 101.1** CRANN to bring forward detailed plans regarding the diversification of its income streams at the next meeting of the Committee in September 2012.
- 101.2** The Director of CRANN to update the Committee in Michaelmas Term 2012.

FN/11 - 12/102 Science Gallery

(Minute FN/11-12/38 of 14.12.2011 refers)

The Committee noted the bi-annual report from the Director of the Science Gallery dated 08.05.2012 as circulated and the financial position as reported. In response to a request to reduce the contribution to its start-up costs in order to achieve a breakeven position in 2011/12, the Committee requested the Science Gallery to reduce their start-up costs in 2011/12 at the original budgeted level and to revise financial expenditure projections for the remaining part of the year to deliver a breakeven position at a minimum. In line with College policy, the Committee invited the Director of the Science Gallery to provide an update in Michaelmas Term 2012.

Action

- 102.1** The Science Gallery to reduce their start-up costs in 2011/12 at the original budgeted level and to revise financial expenditure projections for the remaining part of the year to deliver a breakeven position at a minimum.
- 102.2** The Director of the Science Gallery to update the Committee in Michaelmas Term 2012.

FN/11 - 12/103 IIS

(Minute FN/11-12/41 of 14.12.2011 refers)

The Committee considered the bi-annual report from the Director of the IIS dated 12.06.2012 including updates under the headings of activity, governance, funding (including financial risks) along with income and expenditure projections to 2013/14. Noting the updated financial position as outlined, the Committee expressed concern around the lack of clarity in terms of School support for the Institute and requested the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Science to engage with the Dean of Research, the Director of IIS and the relevant Heads of School to examine ongoing issues associated with the sustainability of the Institute and report back to the Committee in due course.

Action

103.1 The Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Science to engage with the Dean of Research, the Director of IIS and the relevant Heads of School in relation to issues of sustainability and report back to the Committee in due course.

Section C**FN/11 – 12/104 eStrategy – Financial Update**

(Minute FN/2011-12/64 of 22.02.2012 refers)

The Committee, having considered the circulated report dated 06.06.2012 from the Chief Operating Officer, noted the financial position of three of the four projects including the expenditure to date against projected budget and welcomed the additional detail in respect of the budget versus project milestones. Furthermore, the Committee noted that a similar update on all four projects will be provided by the COO on a quarterly basis, with the next update due at the first meeting of the Committee in Michaelmas Term 2012.

Action:

104.1 The COO will provide a quarterly financial update on the four eStrategy projects, with the next report due at the first meeting of the Committee in Michaelmas Term 2012.

FN/11 - 12/105 HEA Accountability and Budget Meeting

The Committee noted the circulated memorandum and associated presentation from the Financial Resources Manager dated 06.06.2012, which outlined the following areas discussed at the Accountability and Budget meeting with the HEA on 9 May 2012:

- Financial Position
- Student/Staff Numbers
- Annual Budgetary Cycle
- Cost Reduction
- Procurement
- Shared Services
- Income Generation
- Strategic Investment
- Research

The Committee noted in particular the inequities identified in the sector in terms of the effects of the Employment Control Framework.

FN/11 - 12/106 Treasury Management Update

In accordance with the Treasury Management Policy, the Committee was circulated with a memorandum and accompanying appendices from the Financial Planning Manager dated 07.06.2012 setting out an update covering the period from 1.09.2011 to 31.05.2012. The Committee noted the detailed update, in particular the developments arising from the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on Educations Audits, and acknowledged that these matters had been included in the College's Risk Register.

FN/11 - 12/107 Related Entity Financial Reporting

The Committee, noting the current financial position of the Academy of Dramatic Art in its start-up phase as set out in the circulated Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2011 (including the unqualified audit opinion), recommended them for onward consideration by Board.

Action:

107.1 The Financial Statements of the Academy of Dramatic Art for the year ended 30 September 2011 to be forwarded to Board for noting.

FN/11 - 12/108 Finance Committee Self-Evaluation
(Minute FN/11-12/1.1 of 22.09.2011 refers)

The Committee considered the report from the College Secretary dated 08.06.2012, which set out in detail the results of the Finance Committee Self-Evaluation process for 2012 under the following headings:

- Role of Finance Committee
- Finance Committee Meetings
- Oversight of Financial Issues, Risk Management and Reporting
- Support for Members

The Committee noted the positive outcome overall along with the improvement in the results from the previous year. Furthermore the Committee endorsed the requirement for the early implementation of the new Financial Information System and also requested the Treasurer to bring forward a list of potential external members for consideration by the Provost (to fill the two remaining positions on the Committee) in advance of Board approval being sought in this regard.

The Committee extended its gratitude to the College Secretary for the comprehensive report provided by her Office.

Action:

108.1 Treasurer to bring forward a list of potential external members of the Finance Committee for consideration by the Provost in advance of Board approval being sought.

FN/11 - 12/109 Minutes of Sub Committees

The Committee noted and approved the following minutes as circulated:

- i. Investment Committee meeting of 08.05.2012
- ii. FECP Meeting of 28.05.2012

Furthermore, the Committee noted that final FECP outcomes for 2010/11 have been approved for release to the IUA and that they will be considered by Planning Group in due course.

FN/11 - 12/110 Finance Committee Meeting Schedule: 2012/2013

The Committee approved the schedule of meeting dates for 2012/13 as circulated.

The Provost, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr Ryan Bartlett, President of the Student’s Union and Professor David Singleton for their constructive contribution to the Finance Committee meetings during their respective terms.

The Committee noted that the next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for 26 September 2012, at 2.30pm in the Provost’s Library.

PROVOST.....

DATE.....