Hi Geoff

Some thoughts on the budget for 2018.

Much as we would like to do zero-based budgeting, the historical stuff does linger!  I don’t have any major thoughts on closure of entities or major budget cuts, but would give very careful thought to whether or not an entity needs anything more in 2018 than they had in 2017.  Indeed could they do with a 5% cut?

Our staff budget is already subject to major interrogation and only those posts that are absolutely necessary are being filled.  No new posts are being established unless massively critical.

At a strategic level, I’d like to identify the following:

Increased enrolment:

Increased enrolment is vital, indeed critical.  Increased enrolment is tightly tethered to both the offerings of the University, how we market the University and Student Recruitment.

Academic staff need to be supported to investigate new programme offerings or improvements to existing programmes.

We need to ensure that the Comms and Adv Div are adequately resourced to present the University in the best light (staff in general, website staff, technology).  Funds need to be provided for marketing materials.

We need to ensure that Student Recruitment is adequately resourced to do the recruitment exercise.  We need a budget for Open Day 2018.

Systems:

Our I&TS systems are the backbone of the institution.  It concerns me greatly that we have major staffing problems in the Division – we simply can’t find staff.  So many of our initiatives (online registration of masters, etc. – Natalie could give you a long list) are floundering because of the shortage of staff.  We need to think of creative funding initiatives to solve I&TS problems to enable us to achieve some of our other strategic objectives.

Image/perception of the University:

Again Comms and Adv need support.  Otherwise the greater majority of our strategic efforts will go nowhere.

I have also looked at the Summit recommendations that need investment.  I would check with HR, but many seem fundable via SETA claims.  Let’s check.  Not quite sure what funding child care services requires, but that would impact of staff retention as a strategy.  I also have a soft spot for the Oppie accommodation standards and affordability register.  Again, not sure of what funding is required.  Given that we have limited accommodation on campus, anything that would improve oppie accommodation would feed into an increased enrolment strategy.

Regards
Dave

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