

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE FINANCE, RESOURCES AND INVESTMENT COMMITTEE
HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS AT 5.30PM ON THURSDAY 26 MARCH
2020**

Present: Mr M Stone (Chair)
Mr D Mabbitt
Mrs A McGrath
Mr K Wharton
Mx I Johnson (Principal and CEO)
Mr K Williams (Interim Vice Principal Finance and Resources)

In attendance: Mrs J Matthews (Director of Governance)
Mrs A Lall (Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality) (until M19/88)
Mr R Sutherland (Director of Business and Community) (until M19/87)

ACTION

- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
M19/83 There were no apologies for absence.
- DECLARATIONS**
M19/84 There were no declarations of interest.
- PROGRESS UPDATES**
M19/85 **Sub-contracting**
The Director of Business and Community presented the update on Sub-contracting and the Committee noted that it was proposed to undertake a further £160k of sub-contracted provision, in addition to the £300k previously agreed. The College would retain a management fee which reflected the support required by the sub-contractor. A question was asked about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on sub-contracting and it was reported that it was performing well but that payment would only be made on the basis that it was earned, and evidence would be required from sub-contractors. The Committee **approved** the additional sub-contracting to the value of £160k as set out in the paper.
- M19/86 **Progress against Apprenticeships budget**
The Director of Business and Community presented the paper setting out progress against the Apprenticeships budget and the potential issues and risks to funding resulting from the Covid-19 lockdown were noted. A question was asked about the likely worst case scenario should the break in learning be longer than the 4-week break permitted, and the Director of Business and Community reported that the different scenarios were being worked through. A further question was asked about when any possible loss of funding would impact and the Interim Vice Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that it was estimated that the College would lose £36k per month for each of the remaining four months of the year.
- M19/87 The Committee was pleased to note that the National Achievement Rate tables released that day had placed the College's apprenticeship provision 8th in the country. Congratulations were expressed to the Apprenticeships Manager and his team.
The Director of Business and Community left the meeting at this point.
- M19/88 **Compliance with Condition of Funding**
The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) reported that there was a 3.7% non-compliance with the condition of funding, which was well below the 5% tolerance, and there was unlikely to be any funding reduction as a result. It was, however, higher than at the same point the previous year and this had been due to issues relating to the management of English and Maths at the beginning of the year. The Vice Principal

(Curriculum and Quality) confirmed that she was confident it would be reduced to previous levels.

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) left the meeting at this point.

MINUTES OF 28 NOVEMBER 2019, 30 JANUARY AND 26 FEBRUARY 2020

M19/89 The minutes of the meetings held on 28 November 2019, 30 January 2020 and 26 February 2020 were approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING ON THE MINUTES

M19/90 Members noted the update on matters arising on the minutes provided in the action tracker and that all actions had been completed.

FINANCE

Management accounts and finance update

M19/91 - 92 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

M19/93 A question was asked about any updates in relation to staffing in the future and the Principal reported that they understood that the College would be eligible for the Government Job Retention Scheme. Work was taking place to look at any staff to whom that might apply and a further question was asked about whether information could be shared with staff as there were some concerns amongst the staff body. The Principal confirmed that following discussions with others in the sector, and the SMT, information would be circulated as soon as possible. It was noted that there were a number of issues on which clarification was still required.

M19/94 The Chair requested that regular updates in relation to cash flow be provided to the Committee and the Interim Vice Principal (Finance and Resources) agreed to provide those. A question was asked if the management accounts still showed the College's financial health to be Good and the Interim Vice Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that he would need to recalculate that.

**Interim VP
(F &R)**

STUDENT ACTIVITY RECRUITMENT REPORT

M19/95 It was noted that FE applications currently stood at 1472, which was higher than any of the previous three years, although acceptances currently remained lower. HE applications were low and currently only 44 acceptances had been received. It was suggested that there were a number of online activities that could be used to keep students warm. A question was asked about the reason for low acceptances and the Principal reported that there was no clear explanation and that since applications were high, work needed to take place to follow those up. It was intended to create an online community for students prior to joining the College.

COURSE FEE AND REFUNDS POLICY 2020-21

M19/96 The updated Course Fee and Refunds Policy for 2020-21 had been circulated and was **approved** by the Committee.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety KPIs

M19/97 Members had received the Health and Safety KPIs and noted that there had been an increase in slips although those had not led to injuries. It was unlikely that these would increase now that the College was working remotely. There had been two RIDDOR incidents. A question was asked about whether staff were fully reporting on accidents they were involved in themselves, and it was confirmed that it was possible they were not and should therefore be encouraged by management. The near misses in the car park were noted and the Committee requested that a reminder be included in communications to staff to remind visitors to reverse park in the parking spaces on the

Principal

crescent.

Coronavirus response

M19/98

The Principal reported that a College COBRA meeting was taking place daily and that the College had been prepared in good time for the lockdown. All staff were working remotely and the key issue remained the College's financial position. The ESFA had confirmed that the College would be paid according to profile but some of the AEB funding was at risk along with Apprenticeships funding. The ESFA had confirmed that it would repay any exceptional expenditure which would therefore allow costs of deep cleans and work on vent systems and air filters to be recharged. The Principal had raised the issue of exam costs with the AoC and ESFA in recent discussions since exams were no longer taking place. Members noted that the Interim Vice Principal (Finance and Resources) had been asked to prepare the College's worst case scenario, along with other possible scenarios, and the Chair requested that an update on that planning be provided at the next meeting.

**Interim VP
(F&R)/
Principal**

ESTATES AND TECHNOLOGY

M19/99

The Interim Vice Principal (Finance and Resources) reported that the installation of solar panels was currently on hold and the SAN would also not be installed in May. Staff had moved files onto One drive which had reduced the risk in relation to the SAN. A copy of the phishing report carried out by KPMG had been circulated and it was noted that it had also been discussed by the Audit Committee the previous week. The Audit Committee had expressed its concerns about the results and had discussed carrying out a further review with the new internal auditors. An action plan had yet to be produced following the review but would be completed and submitted to the Audit Committee. A question was asked about whether the second review would be actioned before the next meeting of the Audit Committee and it was confirmed that it would be, with work also being done with staff by the professional development team, given the importance of this area whilst remote working.

M19/100

A question was asked about whether the move of Hair and Beauty and Catering from the High Street would proceed and the Interim Vice Principal (Finance and Resources) confirmed that it would. No significant spend had been commissioned and £60k had been allocated for the period to the end of July 2020 with the balance being paid from August 2020 onwards. A question was asked about whether the move would still be completed by the start of the new academic year and it was confirmed that it would and that whilst there would be some spend associated with the move, there would be savings in the future.

EQUINE UNIT

M19/101

CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

M19/102

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 14 May 2020.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.