

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE FINANCE, RESOURCES AND INVESTMENT COMMITTEE
HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS AT 5.30PM ON WEDNESDAY 29
MARCH 2023**

Present:	Mr D Langton (Chair) Dr A Birkinshaw Mrs A Lall (Interim Principal and Chief Executive) Mrs H Kerrick Mr G Dixon (Vice-Principal Finance and Resources)	In attendance:	Mr D Bulloch (Interim Assistant Principal - Curriculum – for Item 4b) Mrs J Tracy (Interim Director of Governance) Mr A Tyley (Deputy FE Commissioner) (for the presentation only)
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ACTION

PRESENTATION – CURRICULUM EFFICIENCY AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- M22/60 Mr Tyley introduced himself to Committee members and reported on the key findings of the Curriculum Efficiency and Financial Sustainability (CEFS) review.
- M22/61 The presentation covered the aim, background and context, an executive summary and conclusions and a summary of suggested actions in relation to curriculum planning, curriculum efficiency and learner profile. It was noted that no suggested actions had been made in relation to cost profile and overheads, or performance against FEC benchmarks.
- M22/62 The Committee noted that of the 9 suggested actions, only one had been rated as high, this being in relation to class sizes. The Interim Principal had welcomed the support from Andrew Tyley and the FE Commissioner’s office and reported that, whilst there was work still to do, staff and room utilisation were now being better considered. The College had also already implemented some of the best practice identified by the visits to Sparsholt and Shuttleworth.
- M22/63 The Chair of the Governing Board asked whether the review had looked at outstanding colleges to see whether their financial profile was different and Mr Tyley stated that he would also look to expand the CEFS in relation to class size and achievement for English and maths.
- M22/64 In answer to a question from the Committee Chair on how visibility of the actions going forward would be maintained, the Interim Principal informed the Committee that members of Senior Management Team and other managers would be involved, with SMT holding managers to account. It was **agreed** that an update would be provided in a year’s time in addition to the usual reports on class size, etc. **IP**
- M22/65 The Committee agreed that the report provided some good assurance and also areas of focus. It also required that quality must always be kept at the forefront.
- M22/66 Mr Tyley was thanked for his presentation and left the meeting.

Item 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

M22/67 There were apologies for absence from Mr E Drake.

Item 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

M22/68 There were no declarations of interest.

Item 3: MINUTES

Item 3a: Minutes of the Meetings Held on 16 November 2022 and 30 November 2022

M22/69	<p>Corrections to the minutes of the meetings held on 16 November 2022 and 30 November 2022 would be made to record Mrs Kerrick's attendance (16 November 2022) and Mr Stone's late arrival (30 November 2022) and, with these amendments, were approved as correct records.</p>	
	<p>Item 3b: ACTION TRACKER AND MATTERS ARISING</p>	
M22/70	<p>Members noted the update on matters arising on the minutes provided in the action tracker. The Interim Principal reported that the due dates of actions now assigned to her as Interim Principal would be reviewed and amended if necessary.</p>	IP
M22/71	<p>M22/09 onwards The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources covered the actions which had been flagged as amber, the Committee noting that work was being undertaken on the data which would allow for the actions to be updated. The Committee noted that the College was intending to bring all areas into central control to ensure consistency of approach.</p>	
	<p>Item 4: PROGRESS UPDATES</p>	
	<p>Item 4a: Applications Update</p>	
M22/72	<p>The Vice Principal- Finance and Resources presented the report.</p>	
M22/73	<p>The Committee noted that applications were slightly down but that the conversion rate was improving. Recruitment to T-levels was underway, HE enrolment was broadly in line with last year and apprenticeships continued to be brought into the central monitoring to enable better data reporting, quality, etc.</p>	
M22/74	<p>The Chair asked what else could be done/was being doing to increase student numbers. Information on the additional open evenings, the apprenticeship event in April and other activities was provided by the Interim Principal.</p>	
M22/75	<p>In answer to a question from the Committee Chair, it was confirmed that the process in apprenticeships was being led by the Interim Assistant Principal – Curriculum Duncan Bulloch, with the support of the Senior Management Team. It was agreed that the College needed to have a better focus on this in reporting to the Committee.</p>	IAP C
M22/76	<p>The College confirmed that it would be able to benchmark the success or otherwise of the marketing activities across all areas. Feeder school analysis and progression information at all levels – 16-18, adults, HE, apprenticeships – was also available and this data would be used in the development of the Marketing Strategy.</p>	
M22/77	<p>Duncan Bulloch, the Interim Assistant Principal - Curriculum joined the meeting.</p>	
	<p>Item 4b: Funding update</p>	
M22/78	<p>The Funding update report summarised the progress on enrolments and the associated financial performance for 16-19 study programmes, High Needs, Adult Education Budget (AEB), Apprenticeships, Advance Learner Loans (ALL) and Higher Education (HE).</p>	
M22/79	<p>A discussion took place in relation to the staffing issues and on the steps being taken by the College to ensure that programmes which could not be staffed were not advertised. The Committee noted the potential damage to the College's reputation and requested that the College look at contingencies to ensure that this did not happen.</p>	IP/IAP C
M22/80	<p>In relation to adult provision, the College was asked to look at the planning in this area to ensure that it was scrupulous and that a profit was made.</p>	IP/IAP C
M22/64	<p>The Committee then considered the information provided on subcontracting. It was noted that ESFA approval would be required and that due diligence checks were being</p>	

	undertaken. The College also confirmed that, post devolution, it would be looking to deliver such programmes itself.	
M22/65	The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the approval of the use of subcontracting for AEB delivery, as per the paper.	
M22/66	The Interim Assistant Principal – Curriculum left the meeting.	
	Item 5: FINANCE	
	Item 5a: Management Accounts	
M22/67	The Vice-Principal - Finance and Resources presented the February management accounts and members noted that the College was £242k behind budget and that the financial health grade as at 28 February 2023 was 'requires improvement'. Information on the cash balance was also considered by the Committee, the need to sustain the improvements in recruitment being stressed by the Chair of the Committee.	
M22/68	The forecast for 31 July 2023 was considered, the impact of increased energy costs and the challenges in AEB delivery being a factor.	
M22/69	The Committee considered the information provided on class sizes and curriculum department performance and it was agreed that the table would be amended to include numbers relating to adult, HE and apprenticeships.	VP FR
M22/70	It was agreed that the management accounts would be circulated within 10 days of production.	VP FR
	Item 4b: 2023-24 Top-Down Budget View	
M22/71	The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources presented the report which provided a high-level summary of the top-down budget view for 2023-2024 and included the initial proposal of a blended percentage pay award from January 2024. The Committee was informed that the unions had put in a claim for a 15% pay award to the AoC and that this could, if agreed, bring instability going forward.	
M22/72	The budget would be finalised once all business planning rounds had been completed.	
M22/73	Detail on income, payroll costs and non-pay costs was included in the report, with the College working to maintain a 'good' financial health grade.	
M22/74	Having noted the content of the report, the Committee agreed that the percentage pay award figure was reasonable and should be included in the budget as a planning assumption at this stage.	
M22/75	The College was asked if it had considered a review on the outsourcing of areas such as cleaning. The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources agreed to re-look at this option.	VP FR
	Item 5c: 2023-24 Funding Agreement	
M22/76	The report provided the Committee with an update on the College's ESFA 16-19 funding allocation statement for the 2023-24 academic year. A comparison of the core funding lines and detail on the main significant variances between the 2022-23 and 2023-24 allocations were included.	
M22/81	Base rate increases had been included, together with an uplift in the programme cost weighting for a number of areas. Whilst disadvantage funding had reduced, the College was not as badly affected as some other colleges.	
	Item 5d: ONS reclassification – Implications for the College	
M22/82	The Vice Principal - Finance and Resources provided a verbal update. A full report will be	

presented to the Board at the Board briefing meeting on Thursday 25 May 2023.

VP FR

Item 6: ESTATES AND TECHNOLOGY

Item 6a: Equine Unit

M22/83 The report provided information on the changes that impacted the cost of the build of the Equine Unit. Discussions with the General Manager of Craven Cattle Mart and the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources had taken place to agree a proposed solution to address this additional cost challenge through a combination of a higher initial rent for a longer period of time and reverting to a lower continuation rent.

M22/84 In answer to a question from the Chair of the Committee, the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources confirmed the risk that the College would pick up any additional costs in rent and that whilst there would be no financial implications by not agreeing to the proposal, there would be damage to the relationship between the two parties.

M22/85 The Committee **requested** that a separate report on all of elements of the Equine Unit, including the commercial element, be presented to the Committee going forward.

VP FR

M22/86 The request to approve the rental amount proposed would be taken to the Board at its meeting on 30 March 2023.

Item 6b: Estates report

M22/87 The Committee had received the Estates report and noted that a paper on the High Street building was included later in the agenda.

Item 6c: Technology Report

M22/88 The Technology report had been circulated and provided the Committee with information on the range of IT, cyber and web development related activity since the last Finance, Resources and Investment Committee update.

M22/89 A member of the Committee expressed surprise at the stated focus of CCTV monitoring. It was **agreed** that the wording in the Policy would be checked and amended as necessary to reflect that this related to building protection.

VP FR

M22/90 The Committee also **requested** that the IT Strategy be brought back to a future Committee meeting.

VP FR

Item 6d: High Street Update

M22/91 It was **agreed** that this item (in italics) would be classified as confidential – not for publication.

Item 7: HEALTH AND SAFETY

Item 7a: Health and Safety Report

M22/96 The paper provided the Committee with an update on the health and safety aspects in the College, including accident reporting, near miss incidents, mandatory training, fire procedures, risk assessments and the Health and Safety Committee and audit.

M22/97 The Chair of the Committee noted that whilst the overall incidents by subject area had decreased in comparison to the previous year, there were sizeable increases in some curriculum areas. The Vice Principal - Finance and Resources confirmed that this was because incidents were now being reported, rather than an increase in the actual number of incidents.

M22/98 At the request of the Committee, it was **agreed** that more detailed information on risk assessment be included in the next report.

VP FR

Item 8: POLICIES

Item 8a: Course Fee and Refunds Policy and Fees Appendix

M22/99 The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources presented the report. The Course Fee and Refund Policy had been reviewed and minimal changes were proposed, the detail being included in the paper. Details on the proposed fees were considered, it being noted that comparisons with other local providers had been undertaken in relation to HE fees.

M22/100 The Committee **requested** that the College undertake a check on the calculations of the HE fees per 20 credits.

VP FR

M22/101 After consideration and noting the request above, Finance and Resources Committee **agreed** to recommend the Course Fee and Refunds Policy and the course fees for 2023/24 and those for HE for 2024/25 to the Board for approval.

Item 9: RISK REVIEW

M22/102 The Committee noted the review of the Risk Register which had been undertaken by the Risk Management Group at its meeting on 2 February 2023 and its agreement that 5 risks within the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee’s remit were no longer applicable and/or could be merged with other risks. The Committee was informed that the ONS reclassification would be added to the risk register.

M22/103 A summary of the net risk rating and movement in risks since the last update, together with the full detail on the risks was included in the papers and was noted by the Committee.

Item 10: REVIEW OF MEETING

M22/104 Members reviewed the meeting and, whilst long, agreed there was nothing further to raise.

Item 11: DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

M22/105 Wednesday 3 May 2023 at 5.30pm (Optional) – meeting confirmed
Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.10pm