

MINUTES



RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 23rd March 2021
Time: 5.00pm
Venue: Video Conference

Present:

Dr Andrew Roberts (Chair)
Bill Webster (Principal)
Kate Flood
Tony Unsworth
Professor George Holmes

In Attendance:

Garry Westwater (Executive Director of Finance)
Jane Marsh (HR Director)
Deborah Bradburn (Clerk)

1. SECTION A - BUSINESS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

1.1 Welcome to Members

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, which commenced at 5.00pm.

1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Tim Openshaw.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted particularly in relation to the University of Bolton reciprocal governance arrangements and also paid positions.

1.4 Request for an item to be unstarred

No requests were made.

1.5 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th January 2021

The minutes of the meeting held 19 January 2021 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

Agreed: that the minutes are approved as a correct record and authorised for publication.

1.6 Matters arising from the Minutes and Action Progress Log

The action progress log was reviewed and the following points were noted:

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- There were fewer learners on HND programmes with the majority on apprenticeships. The College was developing new workplace HND programmes in collaboration with the University.

2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

2.1 Financial Update – LEO2 Update and Cash Flow

The following update was provided by the Executive Director of Finance:

- The College had forecast an operating surplus of £421k for 2020/21.
- GMCA reported that there may be clawback on the adult education budget for those that were not operating within a 90% delivery tolerance. The College was currently delivering between 70-75% and would wait for further information before deciding what steps to take.
- The College would submit a claim for business interruption to its insurers.
- Given the significant review of non-pay costs the year end cash position would ensure that the covenants were passed.
- The College would receive £590k T Level capital funding that would be used for digital equipment with some allocated to refurbishments.
- The College was to recover overpayments made to employers for apprenticeship bonuses.

Governor Questions:

- What was the clawback risk to the College?
The risk was 15% (circa. £480k). This was not to say that it would happen as it had been previously reported that there would not be any clawback. If clawback happened the College would need to take remedial action. An update on the position would be presented to the Board in April 2021.
- Had colleges received any written notification in relation to funding clawback?
Colleges had not received anything yet. The update was by way of a file note from a College Group meeting.
- What was the College doing to ensure overpayments would not occur again?
This was a .cvs file programming error with the uploaded file rectified.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the update provided.

ACTION:

- Executive Finance Director to include funding clawback update in financial report to Board.
- Clawback note from College Group meeting to be circulated.

2.2 Funding Allocations 2021/22

The following update was provided by the Executive Director of Finance:

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- The ESFA funding allocation for 16-19 years had increased for 2021/22 with an increase tariff for T Levels. This was not lagged funding and would be received when learners commenced study.
- Funding had increased by £417k for 2021/22 with another year of growth for 16-19 years.
- An extension to grant had been confirmed for the increase in employer pension contributions to the teacher pension scheme.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the update provided.

2.3 FE Commissioner Financial Benchmarks

The following update was provided by the Clerk:

- The FEC had updated its financial benchmarks that took effect from February 2021.
- The benchmarks were the basis of the FEC's assessment of colleges but were not in isolation a trigger for intervention and would be used in the context of a College's overall financial performance.
- The FEC encouraged use of the benchmarks as another tool to be considered when setting budgets and financial objectives that would aid executive teams and Governors when monitoring financial health.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the update provided.

ACTION:

FEC financial benchmarks to be included in the KPI dashboard.

2.4 College KPI Dashboard

The KPI dashboard was reviewed and the following points noted:

- The figures reflected the latest forecast that were monitored by the Senior Management Team.
- An amendment was noted in the HE forecast figures and respective RAG rating adjustment.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the KPI Summary Dashboard.

ACTION:

Amendment to be made to the HE forecast figure.

(Prof George Holmes joined the meeting at 5.23pm)

2.5 Annual Statement of Focus

The following update was provided by the Principal:

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- The annual statement detailed a draft set of priorities for consideration by the College when formulating its Annual Strategic and Operating Plan for the year following discussions between the College and University and would be presented to both College and University Boards.
- A change had been made to soften the T Level capital build to provide flexibility.
- The health and safety of staff and learners to ensure stability was to be maintained.

Governor Questions:

- Was it intentional that the statement did not have a COVID-19 focus?
This was implied but could be made more explicit. This would be further developed and incorporated into the statement, in addition to the inclusion of the impact of online teaching, digital strategy and mental health and well-being agenda.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the annual statement of focus presented.

ACTION:

Annual statement of focus to be further discussed, updated and re-circulated to the Committee for review.

2.6 Gender Pay Annual Report

The HR Director presented the report and the following points were highlighted:

- It was a legal requirement for all companies with 250+ employees to report and publish their gender pay gap.
- The Government had extended the reporting requirement deadline to October 2021. The College would report its data by the end of March 2021.
- The College pay gap was 9.66% that was slightly below the national average of 15.5% and was a positive outturn.
- There had been a slight shift in the quartiles that had reflected the different job roles and societal norms.
- The College had looked to make improvements to close the gap and had implemented Government advice and guidance with a view to working further on this agenda.

Governor Questions:

- What period did the data cover?
This was a data snapshot from March 2020.
- Was there any correlation between the move to digital learning and movement in the quartile data?
There had not been anything significant to explain the shift. The move to digital learning would have had an impact but it would not be the sole overriding factor.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the Gender Pay Annual Report.

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ACTION:

- Gender pay annual report to be published on website.
- HR Director to report gender pay data to the Government.

3. SECTION C - UNIVERSITY GROUP MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED

4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 8th June 2021 at 5.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 6.12 pm

Chair's Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Neel'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Date: 8 June 2021