

# MINUTES



## RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

**Date:** Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
**Time:** 5.00pm  
**Venue:** SMT Meeting Room

### **Present:**

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

### **In Attendance:**

Garry Westwater (Executive Director of Finance)  
Jane Marsh (HR Director)  
Tim Openshaw (University of Bolton)  
Rebecca Davison (Staff Governor)  
Fatema Hussein (Interim Clerk to the Board)  
Deborah Bradburn (Governance Manager)

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

### **1.1 Welcome to Members**

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting, which commenced at 5.07pm.

### **1.2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Professor G E Holmes.

### **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 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held 21 January 2020 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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- The College would submit a funding growth bid request of circa. £200k.
- Workforce diversity figures were similar to College peers.

**(Mrs Kate Flood joined the meeting at 5.13pm)**

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

### **2.1 Financial Update – LEO2 Forecast / Cash-Flow Reporting and Loan Covenants**

The Executive Director of Finance presented the update and the following points were highlighted to the Committee:

- It was only a few weeks since the LEO1 report and therefore no significant progress on the deficit had been made, which now stood at £-411k
- Since the LEO2 figures had been reported, apprenticeship income had increased by an additional £50,000 and there was a possibility to apply for additional funds from the Adult Education Budget (AEB).
- Cash balances were projected to be £1.5 million and in line with the data included in IFMC (Integrated Financial Model)
- Bank covenants were challenging however, the financial health remains good
- Budget holders had been informed to exercise constraint and only essential staff posts were being recruited to
- The impact of COVID-19 would pose a risk and increase pressure to the agency budget due to staff sickness and self-isolation. The government had indicated that no staff, including agency workers, would be disadvantaged due to COVID-19.
- There were income lines on the AEB budget that could further improve the College finances
- College would know if it had been successful with the AEB bid by the end of the week.
- An additional £160-£170k was required in order to meet the bank covenant. If the AEB bid was successful it would help to address the matter.
- Options to reduce the deficit were required within the next 3 – 4 months. All avenues were to be explored
- ESFA were aware of the financial forecasts as they monitored these in addition to the management accounts and the IFMC.

### **Governor Questions:**

- Could the College remotely tutor learners?  
There was already a lot available via Moodle, and the College was delivering as much as possible online. The College would at all times try to minimise any impact on the learner. Most learners would have some level of access to learning materials if the College was to close.
- Was there a contingency plan in place?  
The College had a COVID-19 task group with all areas being reviewed by the senior management team i.e. IT, finance, staff shortages. The full plan would be completed by the end of the week.
- Had the College informed all departments to reduce spend in order to reduce the deficit?

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Yes this had been done. All capital spend had been stopped with anything above £5k requiring sign off at senior level. The additional income from apprenticeships and AEB had not been factored into the income line and would be revisited again to see what could be further reduced.

- Could the College bring forward its long-term financial plan?  
This would not have an impact on this year's budget. The College was funded on a lag basis. Next year the finances would move in a positive direction.
- Should additional resource be allocated to apprenticeships?  
Apprenticeships had achieved 98.6% of its budget. More resources could be allocated to the areas that had capacity.

It was noted that the College did not currently have any alternative solutions to resolve its financial deficit. The bank covenants would be met at year-end but there was a very high risk that these would not be met on a monthly basis. The College would know at the end of the week if there was an issue to address, and this was dependent on the outcome of the AEB bid.

The Committee agreed that the College should make a concerted effort to not fail the bank covenants. The Committee requested that the College provided an action plan on how the deficit was to be addressed before the next meeting.

The Committee also requested that the College provided a fortnightly update to members on the headline financial issues with details of key losses and gains.

## **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the contents of the Financial Update report.

## **ACTION:**

- Executive Director of Finance to provide a fortnightly update on College finances to the Resources Committee.

## **2.2 ADA Commercialisation Update**

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

- The College was waiting on an update from Bharrachd Ltd. Interest had also been received from Capita, IBM, Huawei and a College Group. The College's focus was on Capita and Bharrachd Ltd.
- A business plan had been provided to Bharrachd Ltd who wanted to see the source code in order to assess if the technology could be developed further. The College was scheduled to meet with Bharrachd Ltd next week.

## **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the update provided.

## **ACTION:**

- Finance Director to provide an update to the Committee on the commercial options available with the ADA technology.

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## 2.3 College KPI Dashboard

Tim Openshaw presented the report and the following points were highlighted:

- The dashboard had been updated to reflect LEO2 and had incorporated the area review financial KPI's/benchmarks and OfS reportable events.
- There were no changes to the quality indicators.

### RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the KPI Summary Dashboard and requested that the area review financial KPI's/benchmarks be presented as a separate column.

### ACTION:

Financial KPIs/benchmarks to be reflected in the College KPI dashboard as a separate column.

## 2.4 Annual Statement to inform College Planning

Tim Openshaw presented the report and the following points were highlighted:

- The University had provided the College with a draft statement in order for the College to create its annual plan.
- The University required the College to meet its financial plan more than it had done to date.

### RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the annual statement and requested an amendment to the financial KPI's.

### ACTION:

Amendment to financial key theme to be presented to the University Resources Committee.

## 2.5 ESFA Funding Allocations 2020/21

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

- There was an increase of £1.4 million in core funding for 2020/21
- £1.2 million of this was for core delivery. There was £112k for student support and an increase in the TPS grant of £40k.

### Governor Questions:

- How did the College set its targets and were they linked to where the demand was and addressing employer needs?  
The College analysed the employment market.

The cohort of 16 year olds was increasing, next year would see a 2% increase with a 20% increase over the next 3 years. The College was finessing curriculum areas on where it

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anticipated demand was going to be and where it saw government direction on STEM subjects and health within the Bolton context.

- What was the position on the bus pass?  
This bus pass was a 2-year pilot. The College had surveyed incoming learners with the two areas that most attracted learners to the College being the connection with the University and the bus pass.
- Were there opportunities to further showcase the Anderton Centre?  
The Anderton Centre was included in offers made to students; the College would do more to promote this and include in the recruitment material. There were not large numbers on the Duke of Edinburgh awards as learners completed the national citizenship with Bolton Lads & Girls Club.
- Did the College know what was happening with the Bolton Sixth Form extension?  
The build was overrunning and would not be ready for September 2020. It was thought that there could be the capacity for a further 100-150 more learners.
- How many other colleges would be in a similar funding position to Bolton College?  
Most colleges would struggle this year and would be in a better position next year.

It was noted that T-Levels capital funding would also be available to access next year.

## **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the ESFA funding allocation for 2020/21 and agreed that the College would still need to keep spending under control and continue to grow learner numbers.

## **ACTION:**

To promote the Anderton Centre more widely within learner recruitment material.

## **2.6 DfE Insolvency Guidance Update**

The Clerk presented the report and it was noted that there were no significant updates. The key changes were highlighted and a link to the guidance provided.

## **Governor Questions:**

- How relevant was the DfE insolvency guidance to the College as a subsidiary?  
The guidance remained relevant, as the College was still a separate legal entity.

## **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the updated DfE insolvency guidance and requested that it was circulated to all Board members.

## **ACTION:**

Clerk / Board Agenda

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## 2.7 HR Matters – Equality & Diversity Annual Report

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

- The College had 17 diversity champions that assisted with College events and diversity days.
- Staff training had been delivered that linked to the equality and diversity strategy. The training offered to staff had improved with the development of a portal for training activities.
- 'Time to Talk' was delivered in February 2020 as part of the mental health and wellbeing strategy with training for mental health first aiders.

### Governor Questions:

- What feedback had been received from the mental health first aiders?  
Training was good with 25 staff trained. It was being used informally with positive feedback. The College used University STRIVE bid funding to train the first aiders that confirmed further benefits of the merger. The first aiders supported everyone at the College and split between adult and youth provision.
- Did the diversity champions have specific areas to champion?  
Some had multiple areas and some had single areas to cover. The champions received more recognition and the College would look to build on that. There was an issue with external contacts and finding the correct personnel in order to provide further support to individuals.
- Was there anything more that the College could do to support the diversity champions?  
Additional funding would assist further work in the area.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the equality and diversity annual report.

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

### 3.1 Bolton College of Medical Sciences

The following verbal update was provided on the Bolton College of Medical Sciences (BCMS):

- A condition of the GMCA capital funding was for a charge to be placed on the new building. This was not possible and a letter had been submitted to GMCA stating the reasons why. A response from GMCA was expected shortly.
- A clearer view on the BCMS position and costs incurred to date would be provided to the Board.

### **ACTION:**

Clerk / Board Agenda

## 4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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## 4.1 Laptop use at committee and Board meetings.

- Board members were to be asked if they would prefer to bring their own devices in for use at meetings.

### **ACTION:**

Clerk to include on Board Agenda for discussion

## **5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS**

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 5.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 6.42 pm

**Chair's Signature:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Reilly'.

**Date:** 9 June 2020