

# MINUTES



## RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

**Date:** Tuesday 26 September 2023  
**Time:** 5.00pm  
**Venue:** Boardroom / Videoconference

### **Present:**

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

### **In Attendance:**

Garry Westwater (Executive Director of Finance)  
Jane Marsh (Executive Director of HR and Estates)  
Deborah Bradburn (Clerk)  
Jill Hebden (Minute Taker)

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

### **1.1 Election of Committee Chair**

Members were invited to put forward a nomination and elect a Chair for the Committee.  
Dr Andrew Roberts was nominated and a vote taken.

### **RESOLVED:**

Dr Andrew Roberts be elected Chair of the Committee for the current academic year.

### **1.2 Welcome to Members**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, which commenced at 5.04pm.

### **1.3 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Professor George Holmes.

### **1.4 Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed.

### **1.5 Request for an item to be unstarred**

No requests were made.

## 1.6 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023

The minutes of the meeting held 6 June 2023 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

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

## 1.7 Matters arising from the Minutes and Action Progress Log

The Clerk presented the action progress log and confirmed that all actions from the previous meeting had been completed.

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

### 2.1 Financial Update 2022/23 and 2023/24

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

- The income forecast was as expected with some variances that were to be reviewed.
- The bank covenants had been waived following the impact of the adult learner recruitment, pay inflation and increased utility costs.
- Recruitment was good for 16/18-year-olds with a steady recruitment outcome for apprenticeships. Additional ESFA funding was confirmed of circa. £950k that would be subject to recruitment.
- The ESFA financial assessment would take place once the accounts had been finalised.
- The financial statements would be presented to the Audit Committee and Board respectively.

### **Governor Questions:**

If GMCA are prepared for colleges to deliver less for the same money, are there potential savings?

Not on the typical class sizes of our programmes. However, we can over deliver this academic year.

What is driving the 7.3% expenditure overspend?

This is a combination of being unable to recruit to certain roles and the price of inflation being built into agency costs. Agency workers are asking for higher rates with some not interested in being employees, agency work provides them with more flexibility irrespective of the benefits that are available as an employee.

What are the expected savings with Bolton Talent Solutions?

A cautious figure is circa. £250k. There will still be some spend on agency staff on the occasion where Bolton Talent Solutions is unable to source an individual.

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Do we use agencies to recruit?

Occasionally for those hard to fill roles and to increase the recruitment pool.

How much has been spent on 'Golden Hellos'?

This information will be available at the next Board meeting.

In terms of the draft results of -£1,068k, is this the final figure?

Yes, although there will potentially be a slight difference.

What was the main driver for the difference in the operating surplus?

Non-pay savings mainly.

## **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the financial update provided.

## **ACTION:**

Expenditure on 'Golden Hellos' to be provided in the financial update to the Board.

## **2.2 College KPI Dashboard**

The KPI dashboard was reviewed and the following points noted:

- There had been the inclusion of student progression increasing one or more grades, which was a more intuitive measure than previous.
- Discussions had taken place to increase adult learner recruitment. Low recruitment had been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis with potential adult learners choosing to increase their work hours than pursue educational development.

## **Governor Questions:**

Why do English and maths appear to be doing worse, compared to previous?

In relative terms the subjects are doing better. However, one of the key measures is Grade 4 achievements. The boundary between Grade 3 and 4 has increased significantly, a high number of students who achieved a Grade 3 this year, would have achieved a Grade 4 if they had sat the subjects in a previous year. This is a national challenge and is the same across schools and colleges with English and maths improvement a substantial item on the Bolton Heads agenda.

Next year there will be up to an additional 250-300 students sitting English and/or maths at the College. The decision has been made to offer those students who achieved a Grade 3, and where close to achieving a Grade 4, the option to re-sit the exam in November. One hundred learners have taken up the option.

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What proportion of students come to the College with a Grade 4?

A small proportion, possibly 200-300 learners. Our aim is for learners to make a grade improvement each year.

Are the interventions for learner achievement working?

Yes, we are making an impact. We have a larger number of students with weaker grades due to the boundary change. This is not just a college matter but reflects what is happening further down in the education system.

If a learner achieves less than a Grade 4, do we still put them into the examination?

Yes, the College looks at the development of the learner and the direction to move up one grade. Learners need a Grade 4 to get onto T Levels.

Does the College report on the progression of learners achieving one grade higher?

This is reported at the Standards and Performance Committee which is then reported at Board.

Are T Level target figures a concern?

There will be a readjustment to curriculum targets based on enrolment numbers. The T Level target is 300 learners, the College currently has 170 learners with further still in the system.

We have a local MP coming into the College for a T Level briefing. The clear message from the College is that we are fully behind them however, there hasn't been a well-coordinated national or regional marketing campaign to support this. AoC continues to raise this at parliamentary level and the College is forging better relationships and working closely with secondary heads in providing them with full details about T Levels. The capital build for T Levels is in progress as space is an increasing challenge.

What is the risk to funding regarding T Levels?

The College would lose the difference between a Band 5 study programme and a Band 8 T Level.

Is the KPI dashboard commentary alongside the curriculum self-assessment accurate?

Invitations have not been issued for SAR panels and will be going out imminently.

## **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the contents of the KPI Summary Dashboard.

## 2.3 Health and Safety Update

The Executive Director of HR and Estates presented the Health and Safety Update, highlighting the following points:

- The speed gate entrances had been delayed until October half term.
- There was no RAAC in any of the College owned buildings. The Community Learning Centres fell under the remit of the local authority with a meeting scheduled in October for the matter to be discussed further.
- The replacement of all four lifts had commenced with completion scheduled in Summer 2024. Contingency plans were in place should any of the lifts be out of commission for any length of time.
- An adiabatic chiller had been replaced with another scheduled for replacement during October half term.
- Fire risk assessments had been undertaken at each of the Community Learning Centres with a number of medium and low risks identified that were being actioned.
- The Fire Regulatory Reform 2005 regulations were to be updated that would bring changes to fire safety management. The impact of the update to the College would be sought.

### Governor Questions:

Who is responsible for fire safety at the Community Learning Centres?

There are Hub Managers that are trained with some attending the College Health and Safety Committee.

Is the training adequate for staff at the Community Learning Centres?

It is. Health and Safety training has been delivered and will be revisited.

Is there a reason that the number of accidents is increasing?

There is an increase in learner numbers and as a result a greater footfall in higher risk areas. As more staff awareness training is delivered there is an expected rise in reporting.

Has there been a decrease in smoking and vaping around the College?

There has been an occasion of the fire alarm being set off due to vaping. However, it is calmer this year in terms of behaviour with a higher degree of learner compliance.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the contents of the Health and Safety Update with the recommendation that all Hub Managers attend the College Health and Safety Committee.

## 2.4 Staff Sickness / Absence Report 2022/23

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

- The overall sickness rate was 5.44%, a slight decrease on the previous year.
- There were robust systems in place for long-term sickness absence. There were ninety-nine long term sickness absences in 2022/23. Eighty-four of these had been supported back into work following successful HR interventions. Those on longer-term sickness absence were managed in accordance with College procedure.

### **Governor Questions:**

Has the College done everything it can to mitigate any risks?

The long-term absences are non-work related.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the contents of the Staff Sickness and Absence Report.

## 2.5 Tribunals and Legal Proceedings Report

The Executive Director of HR and Estates presented the tribunal and legal proceedings report.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the Tribunal and Legal Proceedings Report.

## 2.6 Starred Items

### **(i) \*HR Annual Report 2022/23**

The report, which provided the Committee with an update on some key areas of HR activity during 2022/23, was reviewed and noted.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the HR Annual Report.

### **(ii) \*Resources Committee Terms of Reference**

The report provided an update to the Resources Committee Terms of Reference noting the amendments made were in recognition of the ONS reclassification and due regard given to the HM Treasury 'Managing Public Money' guidance.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee recommended the Resources Committee Terms of Reference for Board approval.

**ACTION:**

Clerk / Board Agenda

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

**4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**E Sports Proposal**

The College planned to deliver an e-Sports provision in 2024/25. The College had secured funding to support the infrastructure and equipment required to deliver the programme. Competitive quotations had been received at circa. £100k that would require Board approval. As the funding had to be spent at short notice it was agreed to seek Board approval by way of Chair's Action.

**Governor Questions:**

Where there any links with the University?

This programme would enrich the University games degree rather than it be a stand-alone programme. The College would inform the University of the new provision.

**RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the proposal.

**ACTION:**

Board approval of e-sports equipment expenditure to be sought via Chair's Action.

**4.1 Meeting Evaluation**

Members confirmed that the reports provided a high level of detail and that significant challenge was made on their content.

**4.2 Reserved Business Minutes**

Agreed that the minutes are approved as a correct record.

**5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS**

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 5.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 6.39pm

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**Chair's Signature:**

**Date:** 16 January 2024