

MINUTES



RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 6 June 2023
Time: 5.00pm
Venue: Boardroom / Videoconference

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Garry Westwater (Executive Director of Finance)
Jane Marsh (Executive Director of HR and Estates)
Tim Openshaw (Asst. Vice Chancellor, UoB)
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 5.02pm.

1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Kate Flood and Professor George Holmes.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

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

1.4 Request for an item to be unstarred

No requests were made.

1.5 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 March 2023

The minutes of the meeting held 23 March 2023 had been previously circulated to Members for consideration.

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

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1.7 Matters arising from the Minutes and Action Progress Log

The Clerk presented the action progress log and confirmed that the outstanding action would be included under agenda item 2.3.

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

2.1 ESFA Financial Health Update and Financial Update

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

- There was a revised deficit forecast of -£910k for financial year 2022/23 due to a shortfall in adult learner numbers.
- A net decrease in income was prudently assumed at circa. +£0.1m and a total net decrease in expenditure was assumed to be -£0.6m for 2023/24.
- The aggregate impact was an improvement of £700k to deliver a £200k operating surplus with minimal capacity for any pay award unless strong recruitment provided sufficient reassurance.
- Budget-holders had restricted expenditure to essential items only and had deferred orders until after the year-end where possible. A rolling review of expenditure was in place with orders in excess of £5k requiring Executive approval.
- There had been a reduction in pension contributions and utility costs. The College had a strong cash position with significant capital grant funding until March 2026.
- Communication from the ESFA was expected in relation to the College financial health grading.

Governor Questions:

The 2024/25 forecast is identical to the 2023/24 budget. Is this realistic and ambitious?

More consideration will be given to the 2024/25 forecast with further changes made.

Does the College have a marketing plan for adult education?

Yes, there is a marketing plan. The learner numbers for ESOL are large with more traditional courses also promoted with a focus on enhancing skills to get achieve a better career. We will look at marketing to ensure more visibility of the adult education provision.

Are there any courses that are not being filled and do we offer weekend and evening courses?

The employment facing, basic level sector-based skills programmes are a challenge to recruit to. The College has capacity to deliver courses at the weekend.

The Committee acknowledged that more intelligence was required in relation to the 2024/25 forecast that took into consideration any pay increments and that a conversation was

required in relation to HE programmes to ensure the College knew what provision to provide ie. Level 4 and 5 with further marketing required for adult education programmes.

ACTION:

The forecast for 2024/25 to be amended.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the financial update provided.

2.2 College KPI Dashboard

The KPI dashboard was reviewed and the following points noted:

- The financial data reflected the budget and the LEO2 year-end forecast for 2022/23 with the forecast deficit due to a shortfall in T-level recruitment and cost pressures.
- Bank covenants had been updated to an 'amber' RAG rating following productive bank discussions.
- A benefit from the merger was the progression of newly qualified teachers from the University resulting in the elimination of reliance on agency staff for maths and English. The 'grow your own' system had worked with positive feedback.

Governor Questions:

Are learner recruitment targets going to be met?

The College will know the outcome of recruitment by Autumn. The T-level recruitment target was 298 of which the College currently had 136 learners with a target for next year set at 300 learners.

Do we need more narrative acknowledging the recruitment issues and what action the College will take?

Apprenticeship learner numbers were down with recruitment taking place throughout the year. At open evenings more people were enquiring about T-levels with the numbers looking positive.

Is there a plan for College HE provision?

There is a continual downward trend with the aim to stabilise and increase HE numbers over the next five years.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the KPI Summary Dashboard.

2.3 Annual Statement of Focus and College Strategic & Operating Plan 2023-24

The College Operating Plan had been developed from the College Strategic Plan and the University's direction as laid out in the Annual Statement of Focus. The Operating Plan was developed across all areas and detailed College challenges and drivers.

The College had identified working with Alliance Learning to utilise their commercial provision to increase College business development and add further value in supporting employers.

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) had been finalised and provided the day after submission of the College accountability agreement. No subsequent changes had been made.

RESOLVED:

The Committee reviewed and noted the contents of the statement of focus and operating plan.

ACTION:

Operating plan to include additional information on marketing.

2.4 Health and Safety Update

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

- The health and safety manager would remain in post whilst the College secured a replacement.
- PwC had undertaken a health and safety review in November 2022 with two recommendations provided. The first recommendation was to consider developing performance measures to capture and monitor health and safety management processes with the second to undertake more trend analysis.
- The Fire Service carried out a visit walkthrough of all buildings at the Deane Road Campus with no action points raised.
- Staff training and development had taken place with Emergency First Aid training provided. The sessions included a focus on seizures, anaphylactic shock, recovery position and CPR that would help the College adhere to the requirements under Martyn's Law.
- Funding had been received from the government to support improvements in the College estate, energy efficiency and T-level development. A 'swipe in/speed gate' system would be implemented.

Governor Questions:

How many first aiders are there?

Circa 30+ with more mental health first aiders. Some first aiders covering both first aid and mental health.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Health and Safety update.

2.5 HR Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2022/23

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

- The report provided an overview of the College's workforce / diversity profile and associated activities. There was a slight deterioration in the pay gap from the previous year, but it remained significantly below the national average.
- A broad range of CPD opportunities were provided for staff including sessions which formed part of the College EDI agenda. A mandatory EDI online course had been introduced with circa. 500 staff that had completed it to date.
- Diversity champions representing all areas of the College were actively involved in key College events and acted as advocates.
- The College had been involved in various projects funded or supported by the AoC. The projects included the development of two on-line tutorials on gun and knife crime and sexual violence and sexual abuse. The College had secured additional funding to develop a third tutorial that would focus on self-harm that would be available to providers across Greater Manchester.
- The College had been awarded the Rainbow Flag Quality Award. This was a national quality assurance framework and exemplified the inclusion work at the College for learners and staff.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the HR Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2022/23.

2.6 Financial Regulations

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

- Following the ONS reclassification, the College financial regulations had effectively been substituted by the HM Treasury document 'Managing Public Money'. The College awaited the new College Financial Handbook scheduled in Spring 2024 for more detailed guidance.

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

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4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 Meeting Evaluation

The Committee confirmed that the meeting had met requirements. Input had been provided by all Committee Members with officers challenged appropriately.

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 26th September 2023 at 5.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 6.04pm

Chair's Signature:

Date: 26 September 2023