

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2024

PRESENT:

Arif Patel	Chair
Dr Fazal Dad	Principal and Chief Executive
Michael Lee	Member
Nadeem Memon	Member
Paul Morris*	Member
Ridwaan Omar	Member
Steve Waggott*	Member
Bryan Welch	Member

IN ATTENDANCE:

Corinne McMillan	Co-opted member
Jennifer Eastham	Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services
Nicola Clayton	Director of Business Development and External Engagement
Sarah Horeesorun	Director of Governance

*Denotes joined the meeting via Teams.

The meeting commenced at 5pm and was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received in advance from Rachel Tarplee, Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair advised those in attendance that should members of the Policy and Resources Committee become aware of any potential conflicts of interest, they should be disclosed at the earliest opportunity during the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 23 September 2024 as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted that agenda items on Martyn's Law and the Campus Masterplan would feature on the agenda of future meetings when timely to do so.

5. PRESENTATION ON A TOPICAL THEME –UPDATE FOR GOVERNORS

6. FINANCIAL POSITION 2023/24

To set the context for the Items that followed, the Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services provided an overview setting out the process for the Annual Report and Financial Statements and explaining that each component is presented here as a separate Report, rather than one large unwieldy Report. This approach, or bite size bits of the process, makes it easier for the Committee members to consider each individual element.

(i) Management Accounts to 31 July 2024 (FINAL)

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services presented this Report reminding members that the pre-finalised Management Accounts had been considered in the September meeting and had only changed marginally since due to a change in the treatment of Pensions in the Accounts.

The Policy and Resources Committee **AGREED** to recommend the Management Accounts 31 July 2024 to the Corporation Board for approval.

(ii) Annual Report and Financial Statements

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that all colleges complete the same pro-forma and exercise as this every year. The figures therein, were the same as those within the management accounts and the documents had also been scrutinised by the Audit Committee at its meeting 19 November 2024.

Pending the one update above, the Committee agreed to **RECOMMEND** the Annual Report 2023/24 and Financial Statement to the Corporation Board for approval at its December meeting.

(iii) Related Party Transactions and Register of Interests

This Report was produced to ensure transparency in and probity in conducting the College's business with any organisation or business with which any of the Governing Body members may have a relationship. The ESFA do review this information, and members were asked to review the content.

Committee members noted the disclosure information and that this would be approved as part of the Financial Statements.

(iv) Review of Financial Objectives

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services reminded members that these objectives were agreed last year.

The Committee agreed the performance against the Financial Objectives 2023/24 and the Financial Objectives for 2024/25 and that these be **RECOMMENDED** to the Corporation Board for approval.

(v) Annual Review of Accounting Policies

Having reviewed the minimal changes to the Accounting Policies for the Financial Statements 2023/24, highlighted in the Appendix, the Committee **AGREED** to recommend these to the Corporation Board for approval.

(vi) ESFA Finance Record

As part of the ESFA Accounts Direction the College is required to submit a Finance Record return to the ESFA by 31 December 2024. This is basically the Financial Statements information entered into a standard template and uploaded to the ESFA for them to analyse and provide sector benchmarking information.

Subject to Board approval of the Financial Statements on 6 December 2024, the Committee approved the submission of the Finance Record to the ESFA.

7. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 SEPTEMBER 2024 AND BUDGET MONITORING UPDATE

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services talked the Committee through the current financial position.

In the discussions that followed there was acknowledgement that the position was better than the same time last year and that challenges ahead included the increase in employer national insurance contributions and the national living wage.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** the Management Accounts to the Corporation Board for approval.

8. VICTORIA BUILDING – ACCOUNTING TREATMENT

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that in auditing the Annual Report and Financial Statements the External Auditors (Beever & Struthers) required confirmation from the Board to the accounting treatment of the works and grant in respect of the Victoria Building refurbishment.

The two options were set out in the Report and had also been considered by the Audit Committee in its meeting 19 November 2024.

There followed discussion and thorough exploration of potential options, before the Committee **AGREED** to recommend to the Board the preferred option.

9. ANTI-BRIBERY ANNUAL REVIEW 2023/24 AND UPDATE

The Committee considered the College's current Anti-Bribery Policy and noted that there were no amendments, and that the Policy remained current, pertinent, and represented the expectations of behaviour for those connected with the College.

There had been no reported instances of bribery in 2023/24, and under its Scheme of Delegation, the Committee **APPROVED** the College's Anti-Bribery Policy.

10. ANNUAL REPORT ON GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY 2023/24 INCLUDING REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The College's Gifts and Hospitality Policy is presented each year for its annual review by the Committee and is accompanied by the register of gifts and hospitality received during the year. During 2023/24 there were two entries on the gifts and hospitality register.

The Committee noted the entries declared in 2023/24.

There were no changes proposed to the policy agreed last year.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Gifts and Hospitality Policy for 2024/25.

11. STUDENT RECRUITMENT UPDATE

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services provided a verbal update on student recruitment numbers informing members that the targets for 16-18 were up slightly on contract, but under for the internal growth target. HE had a shortfall.

12. STRATEGIC PLAN – ANNUAL OPERATING STATEMENT:

- (i) 2023/24 – Final actuals

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services reminded members that the Committee had seen the pre-final Report at their last meeting and the figures had remained the same. The Final position at 31 July 2024 as set out in the Report and the attached Appendix was:

- 13.17- on target
- 6.33 - on target in part
- 0.5 - under target
- 3 - not yet reportable

The Committee noted the content of the Report.

(ii) 2024/25 – Proposed targets for 2024/25 and progress as at 31 October 2024

Members noted the progress made so far in year and the planned activities. No further comments were made.

13. COLLEGE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) :

- i) 31/07/24 FINAL
- ii) 2024/25 progress as at 31 October 2024

- (i) update as at 31/07/2024 (FINAL)

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services introduced this Report. The Committee noted that the Final position of the KPIs for 2023/24 was:

- 13 - on target
- 1 - on target in part
- 8 - under target
- 1 - TBC

The Committee noted the content of this Report.

- (ii) 2024/25 progress

The Committee reviewed the progress made so far on the KPIs for 2024/25 and noted:

- 8 - on target
- 0 - on target in part
- 8 – under target
- 6 – not yet reportable

The Committee noted the progress made so far on the KPIs for 2023/24.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2024

The Report and supporting Appendix provided the core Human Resources (HR) data for the period 1 August 2024 - 31 October 2024.

A member commented that it was good to see the exit interview data now.

The Committee commented that this was a good Report and noted the reduction in staff leavers.

15. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY 2024/25 TERMLY UPDATE

The Director of Business Development and Employer Engagement elaborated on the detail within the Report.

The bids and funding had contributed to the significant investment in the estate and the Industry Collaboration Zone was proving a popular venue and well used by various external businesses and organisations.

Investment in HEAT through SDF and LSIF funding continued to provide opportunities for commercial income, Skills Bootcamps, and business engagement.

Levelling -up funding would allow the College to invest in opening up opportunities to those hard to reach in the local community. The OfS funding continued to support developments in Cyber and Health and it was good to see the refurbished Scholars Restaurant on the BBC news, raising the profile on the College.

The Committee noted the content of the Report and thanked the Director of Business Development and Employer Engagement for the update.

16. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE 2024/25

The Committee were pleased to learn of all of the progress made on the refurbishments and enhancements across the campus during the summer and had seen some of these on a tour of the campus at the October Board meeting.

The Victoria Building 'Topping out' ceremony had been held the previous week and was attended by the Principal and Chief Executive. The Construction Barn had arrived and an exercise to flush the heating system in the Beacon Centre had commenced. Work continued on refurbishment of the washrooms in the Elizabeth Building and the Campus Masterplan would be discussed at an Executive meeting before coming to the Committee.

Members commented that the Masterplan had been a long time in development and acknowledged that there was a lot of work to do to bring together the campus masterplan, financial strategy and investment, business continuity and new College Strategy.

The Vice-Principal said that the next phase of campus projects would be reported at the March meeting.

Steve Waggott left the meeting by prior arrangement at 18.17pm.

17. ESFA COLLEGE FINANCIAL HEALTH LETTER

This letter was shared for information and provided the Committee with assurance regarding the College's Financial Health. Based on the forecasts, the College Financial Forecasting Return generated an auto-score of 'Outstanding' financial health, and this was concurred by the ESFA.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business.

19. REVIEW OF THE MEETING

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services for her Reports and members for the interesting discussions.

20. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT POLICY AND RESOURCES MEETING

Monday 3 March 2025 at 5pm in the Exchange Boardroom and via MS Teams.