

PART A MINUTES

Further Education Corporation Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee Monday 03 October 2022

Date and timings	18:00 to 20:16	
Location	Via Microsoft Teams	
Present	<p>Lee Freeman (LF) Chair Denise Brown (DB) CEO and Principal Roderic Gray (RG) Louise Parr-Morley (LPM) Elizabeth Sipiery (ES) Sarah Stone (SS)</p> <p>Governors by Invitation Rick Olver (RO); Roland Anderson (RA)</p>	
Interim Director of Governance	Lana Jackman (LJ)	
In attendance	<p>Anthony McGarel (AMc) Deputy Principal and CE; Daniel Olorode (DO) Director of Finance; Roney Brooks (RB) Head of HR <i>for Item 3 only</i>; Jayne Sheehan (JS) Vice Principal, Innovation, Growth and Employer Engagement; Adam Fahey (AF) Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality; Steve Hope (SH) <i>for Item 4 only</i></p>	
Apologies		
Quorum (4)		
Item		Action lead
0.	Agenda	
1.	Preliminary items	
1.1	<p>Committee Chair and Vice Chair Election It was proposed by Roderic Gray (RG) that Lee Freeman be voted to the Committee as Chair. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Sipiery (ES). It was decided <u>Unanimously</u> by the Committee that Lee Freeman be Committee Chair.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Brief introductions were made. The Interim Director of Governance and Clerk to the Corporation was introduced to those present. It was noted that Rick</p>	

Olver and Roland Anderson had been appointed Vice-Chairs to the Board and were invited to the Committee Meeting to give them an overview of the committee context, discussions, scrutiny and monitoring of staff, students and the structure and relevant roles of Link Governors. It was agreed that the Vice-Chair role would be an invaluable support for ES, Chair to the Corporation Board.

1.2 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies received.

1.3 Declaration of Interest

It was confirmed that Declaration of Interest Forms were distributed to the governors for the new academic year 2022-2023. All Declaration of Interest Forms had been received. There were no new declarations of interest other than those already standing *(in accordance with the requirements of section 177 of the Companies Act 2006)*.

1.4 Urgent items of other business

There were no urgent items of other business.

1.5 Quorum

The meeting was quorate.

2. Minutes of Meetings held on 27 June and 5 September 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 27 June and 5 September 2022 were accepted and **Approved** as an accurate record. The Minutes will be signed by the Chair and sent to the Executive Team to be filed in the Approved Minutes Folder.

2.1 Matters Arising

The committee commented that DO financial reports were clear and easier for non-financial governors to understand.

It was mentioned that there were a few KPIs for finance that were ongoing from the CFFR Meeting Minutes held on the 5 September 2022.

It was noted that the validation fees would be updated with payment in quarters to UEA rather than a lump sum payment. It was confirmed that a forecast of learner numbers, around 200 Learners, recruited would be submitted.

There were no matters arising from these Minutes not otherwise discussed elsewhere on the agenda.

3. HR (RB arrival 18.09)

i. Termly HR Report

The report was circulated prior to the meeting, received by the Chair and taken as read. RB summarised the report as follows:

It was reported that for the twelve month rolling period sickness and absence on average since the previous report

was 8.25%, above the KPI of 5.03%. The report illustrated College sickness absence data up to 31 August 2022 (*refer to para 4. 4.2 Sickness Absence*) with comparisons to the same period for the past three years. It was noted that cold and flu remained the highest reasons for absence. It was reported that psychological absence linked to anxiety, depression and stress remained a concern. It was confirmed that a wellbeing information forum had been established as well as inclusion of a Mental Health section on the staff medical questionnaire. It was noted that HR provided sessions for staff to speak confidentially about their concerns. It was reported that Flu and Booster Jabs had been provided on Friday 30 September 2022.

In response to a governor query on days lost from 2020 to 2022 by month illustrated in black on the graph (*see HR Matters Item 3i 4.2.2*) did not correlate, RB agreed to recheck the figures and circulate the correction to the Committee.

3i ACTION RB to recheck the days lost figures and circulate the correction to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the resources in place for staff psychological wellbeing was good.

In response to a question raised on the Health Check RB confirmed that it was over-subscribed, and additional dates had been included on the calendar.

ii. HR KPIs 2021-22

It was reported that KPIs relating to staff turnover was 17% or lower with the end turn averaging at 28.93%. A high level of [26%] attrition was reported with the major concern relating to reasons for leaving for the academic year 2021-2022 was dissatisfaction with pay, personal circumstances and other organisations offering significantly higher salaries that the College could not match. It was explained that HR was looking at options to retain staff with a new revised landing page, accepting CVs initially for job applications, reviewing salaries, and looking at overseas recruitment as an option. It was noted that HR was working with the SLT on budgets.

It was reported that there were currently 150 individual roles across student learning, coaching positions, senior management roles, and specialist roles in engineering and construction. The vacancies in engineering and construction it was acknowledged have had to be filled with agency staff.

It was explained that HR was reviewing its recruitment and induction processes to include a piece of work on demographics skills quality training: *how we grow and retain our own*.

It was noted that RB and DO were working together on a plan which showed proposed budgets and a strategy to closely monitor each department's expenditure that could track budgets, and what had been spent. It was noted that the major risk to the overall budget was expenditure on recruitment.

It was discussed that the focus for this academic year would be vacancies and agency staff as well as improvement in attrition, retention and turnover with mental health and wellbeing a priority.

3ii RESOLVED that the termly HR reports include an executive summary at the front and simplified for governors.

AGREED

- i. RB to discuss via email KPIs to be aligned with whole Corporation and with the Mental Health and Wellbeing areas that were accelerating**
- ii. CPD and succession plan for staff**
- iii. It was noted that a formal definition of KPI be reviewed after the Corporation Meeting on the 31 October 2022**
- iv. It was noted that a full investigation report into a Whistleblowing complaint will be brought to the Corporation Meeting on the 31 October 2022.**

It was acknowledged that the restructure was positively received by staff. Though, RB and AF were currently working on resolving a couple of positions with staff. It was noted that AF was working with staff from Procat to integrate them into the wider organisation.

The Committee expressed sincere gratitude to RB and AF on their hard work with the consultation in the summer and for bringing the restructure over the line.

All Agreed.

RB left the meeting at 18.43

4. Health and Safety

- i. H&S Annual Report 2021-2022 and Annual H&S Plan 2022-2023**

The report was presented by Steve Hope (SH). SH summarised the report.

It was reported that the accident data, the statistics for slips, trips and falls whilst navigating the stairs at the beginning and end of the day followed a general trend. In terms of monitoring the data, it was noted that there was still work to be completed on gathering accurate data. However, ongoing

work on monitoring all areas across the campuses to ensure stairs were in good condition was in the process of being completed. SH explained that there was nothing to report in terms of high risk. It was recognised that medical statistics followed a similar trend to the accident data and occurred more often during the exam period. It was explained that SH was conducting work with other colleges across the UK which had reported similar incidents which showed a national trend. It was acknowledged that the H&S team's investigation was ongoing with closing down incidents, putting better processes in place relating to managing critical incidence, general behaviour and developing a risk assessment plan within the H&S strategy. It was acknowledged that overall it was a positive picture in terms of H&S. The following items detailed in the report were discussed. A summary of the items were as follows:

- i. SH gave a brief overview of the continuing one day a week support with Chelmsford College.
- ii. New staff Safety officer roles.
- iii. Positive feedback was received from the Scrutton Bland audit.
- iv. Continuing online training for safety: lone working and working from home.
- v. Reintroducing DfE assessment.
- vi. Looking at budget should staff need additional equipment for home working.
- vii. Statutory insurance inspections.
- viii. An overview of the general wear and tear on parts for lifts and time quality defects. It was noted that there was a plan in place to remain compliant and to get equipment up and running as soon as possible.
- ix. Harnesses and axel stands, a priority inspection was booked for October half-term for insurers.
- x. To continue with H&S audit.
- xi. Staff training to maintain compliance, H&S specialist training in addition to ensure that when technicians leave replacement staff could slot into the roles.
- xii. Future reports to update the Committee on data and analysis relating to training. It was noted that training had seen increased numbers which was having a positive effect.
- xiii. Updated Fire strategies and documents.
- xiv. It was reported that the H&S team had changed strategies to implement the right practices and due diligence to monitor high risk environments relating to work experience to safeguard students on work placement. It was acknowledged that overall safeguarding was positive.
- xv. It was explained that though Covid had an impact on staff absences everyone was now familiar with the positive guidance on how to remain safe should they contract the virus.

In summary, SH wanted the Committee to note that there were challenges, but the report reflected the positive improvements to align with the new structure.

It was recognised that there were still outstanding actions at the end of the report due to the ongoing audit but it was mentioned that the general recommendations, were considered low risk. It was acknowledged that as the term progressed the H&S team would be working through the action plan to close off the in-progress items. Overall, it was mentioned that there were no high risks identified.

In response to a question it was noted that the H&S team spent a great deal of time on the road conducting due diligence across all the campuses which had seen the delivery of a culture of good practice and promotion of that ethos, compared to historic inefficiencies. SH commented that his CPD was ongoing which kept him up to date with change in legislation and enabled him to understand the ongoing needs across the college network and wider sector. SH assured the Committee that the H&S team was doing a good job. It was commented that it was a fantastic achievement reducing the historic litigations. All Agreed

ii. H&S Policy

It was noted that the changes in the policy were to make the content more understandable and to align with the new structural arrangements such as the risks applicable to lone working and risks working from home.

4ii RESOLVED that the H&S Policy be recommended to the Corporation Board be APPROVED

SH left the meeting at 18.44

5. Finance

The report was circulated prior to the meeting, received by the Chair and taken as read. DO summarised the report as follows:

- i. Changes to the Financial Regulations. The Committee noted the changes to the Financial Regulations. It was requested that the track changes be highlighted so that governors could see where changes had been made and circulated prior to the Committee meeting to be held on the 17 October 2022.

It was proposed that the Financial Regulations be approved, in principle, subject to the highlighted track changes clearly shown and circulated to the Committee as soon as possible with a summarised cover sheet.

All Agreed

5i RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations with cover sheet to include the Schedule of Delegation be approved, in principle, and the document with the highlighted track changes be included as an agenda item in the meeting to be held on the 17 October 2022.

ii. Annual expenses report

It was noted that the report covered the 2021-2022 academic year and highlighted expenditure and regulation around expenses, subsistence, travel expenses and review on the approval process relating to staff expenses. The Annual expense report was for the Committee to note.

iii. Learner numbers and cashflow update

It was reported that there were three main areas of concern relating to recruitment. These were as follows:

- a. Reduction in recruitment numbers compared to the anticipated curriculum forecast.
- b. Learners withdrawing from courses prior to the regulatory 42 days required to achieve funding, which it was reported would impact next year's budget. It was anticipated that there were 30 students looking to withdraw. The reasons for withdrawal were due to either courses chosen were wrong or students preferring to return to school sixth form.
- c. Reduction in staff and competing with schools.

It was acknowledged that closer attention to reassessing the curriculum plan and provision to attract learners and the potential to gain students from other schools and/or those who had left other colleges was a priority. It was noted that DB had arranged to have conversations with an academy of excellence and AF was looking to overhaul the curriculum process and timetable.

It was noted that there was a discrepancy regarding numbers shown in class compared to numbers in the data reports. DO confirmed that the finance team was looking closely at the process of enrolment to give the Committee accurate data. It was noted that the team were awaiting figures for sub-contracting.

It was confirmed that more meaningful data would be ready for the 17 October 2022.

The Committee discussed the impact that the impending increase in utilities cost would have on all institutions; individuals, schools, academies and colleges would be facing the same problem.

6. Motion of Confidentiality

[THAT, because of its nature, the business to be conducted be treated as confidential and not for publication]

Capital projects and estates *Confidential item*

7. Policy Review

- i. Risk Management Policy

AGREED that the Risk Management Policy be recommended to the Audit and Risk Committee to review changes to the terminology and to recommend to the Corporation Board.

8. Committee matters (for Info)

The report was received by the committee. The committee noted the report.

- i. Committee Self-assessment 2021-2022 was noted.
- ii. PRC Terms of Reference for approval/update
The Terms of Reference were **APPROVED**

AGREED that the Link Governor roles be approved by Corporation Board.

9. AOB

It was agreed that the P&RC would receive the updated September Management Accounts and cashflow numbers.

10. Forthcoming events

The Committee noted the forthcoming events.

11.

Date of Next Meeting

Monday 17 October 2022 at 18:00 via Teams
Monday 28 November 2022 at 17:30 via Teams
Monday 06 February 2023 at 18:00 via Teams
Monday 20 March 2023 at 18:00 via Teams
Monday 24 April 2023 at 18:00 via Teams
Monday 26 June 2023 at 18:00 via Teams

There being no further business the meeting ended at

Signed.....Dated.....

Actions completed will be removed from the table

Actions from the meeting held on the 03 October 2022

Item	No	Action	Initial	Status
3	3i	RB to recheck the days lost figures and circulate the correction to the Committee.	RB	ongoing
3	3ii	The termly HR reports include an executive summary at the front and simplified for governors.	RB	ongoing
3	3iii	RB to discuss via email KPIs to be aligned with whole Corporation and with the Mental Health and Wellbeing areas that were accelerating iii. CPD and succession plan for staff iv. It was noted that a formal definition of KPI be reviewed after the Corporation Meeting on the 31 October 2022 v. It was noted that a full investigation report into a Whistleblowing complaint will be brought to the Corporation Meeting on the 31 October 2022.	RB	ongoing
4	4ii	The H&S Policy be recommended to the Corporation Board to be <u>APPROVED</u>	SH	ongoing
5	5i	The Financial Regulations with cover sheet to include the Schedule of Delegation be approved, in principle, and the document with the highlighted track changes be included as an agenda item in the meeting to be held on the 17 October 2022.	DO	completed
5	5iii	LPM would email information regarding the Crown Consortium Framework and speak to the College's procurement lead.	LPM	

5	5iv	LF would send over information on management system technologies to AM.	LF	
5	5v	AM and DO would return with further information on the Utility Contracts and response from the Bank in time for the P&RC meeting to be held on the 17 October 2022.	Am/DO	completed
7	7i	The Risk Management Policy be recommended to the Audit and Risk Committee to review changes to the terminology and to recommend to the Corporation Board.	DO	ongoing
8	8i	The Link Governor roles be approved by Corporation Board.	P&RC	completed

ⁱ The code of conduct for Governors requires governors to be honest and open with regard to conflicts of interest (either real or perceived). Governors must not use their position for personal gain in business, political or social relationships. Therefore, a governor who has, or may be perceived to have, such a personal interest in a particular matter under consideration should declare that interest, withdraw from all discussions relating to it and take no part in any vote on such matter.