

Minutes of a meeting of the **Resources, Integration and Change committee**
held on Tuesday 25th January 2022

Present: Jim Webster (Chair)
Peter Boucher, Simon Cove, John Dernie, Carole Kitching, Rob Wheeler

With: Stephen Horrobin, Deputy Principal Finance and Resources
Julian Tucker, Interim Finance Team
Tracy Scaife, Head of Governance

123. Apologies for absence – none received.

The meeting noted that Keeran Vetriko has now resigned as a governor and is therefore no longer a member of the committee. The meeting further noted that the Principal needed to leave the meeting at 5.00pm.

124. Disclosure of Interests – received from Rob Wheeler with regard to his employment with Nationwide Building Society who the college invests with.

125. Minutes of the last meeting held on 30th November 2021 – agreed as a correct record.

No matters arising to discuss at this point as all are covered on the agenda.

126. Risk management update – report by Deputy Principal Finance and Resources received and noted.

Two new material risks have been added to the Risk Register relating to a fall in the college attendance rate and cost inflation, especially increased costs for gas and electricity.

With regard to attendance, there has been a material fall in the core internal 16-19 attendance rate with latest reports indicating a daily attendance rate of circa 72%. Pre-Covid the rate was circa 87% but slipped to 82% last year during the Covid pandemic. Other colleges are also experiencing a fall in attendance rates but the fall at New College is larger than average. Concerns were expressed regarding the financial and inspection implications that this fall could possibly lead to if not urgently reversed. The Principal advised that issues around the reporting of attendance came to the attention of the senior team in the first half of last term and were quickly acted upon. and the issue has been a focus of the team since Christmas. Some gaps in recording processes have been identified and these have been addressed. There is a fundamental concern over the number of students who are either not attending or not attending regularly and a number of actions are being undertaken throughout the college to address these problems. There have been issues identified with marking registers for online sessions, particularly where students have accessed lessons via recordings outside of the live sessions. The committee will need to continue to monitor progress of the actions being taken and report progress to the Corporation.

The material increases in both gas and electricity prices will have an impact on budget and could lead to an exposure this academic year of circa £150k. However in future years the exposure is likely to be much greater and best estimates indicate an increase of circa £150k for gas and £450k for electricity which effectively doubles the utility bill for the college. Advice from the college broker is not to lock in to any deals too soon. Saving energy is being emphasised and encouraged.

127. Management accounts – period 4 – report by Deputy Principal Finance and Resources received and noted.

The meeting received and noted an overview of the accounts and current situation versus budget. There is a significant underspend on pay and the reasons for this were further noted. Variances across other expenditure lines were also noted. The current cash flow forecast includes an assumption that the Lloyds Bank loan will be repaid early in full as permitted.

128. FHP Software implementation update – report by Deputy Principal Finance and Resources and IT Project Coordinator received and noted.

It was further noted that no further progress has been made since the last report with regard to the implementation of the MHR system. The installation of the core payroll aspect of the system has been completed but the HR team have been engaged on other matters and therefore installation of other aspects of the system has been delayed. The Deputy Principal Finance and Resources advised that it has still not been possible to have consultants on-site.

The committee raised concerns that the HR elements of the new systems have not been fully installed and utilised and stated that the college needs to get the full benefit from the investment that it has made and asked for further information on the implementation to be presented to the next meeting of the committee.

ACTION: *JI to present report on the progress made with regard to the new HR system to the next meeting of the committee.*

129. Institute of Technology (IoT) update – verbal update received from Deputy Principal Finance and Resources.

The Deputy Principal Finance and Resources advised that a meeting had been held earlier in the day with BKBS and they advised that the project is still on track to be completed by the end of April. The college is beholden to BKBS to finish on time and the Deputy Principal Finance and Resources is meeting regularly with Ian Webster, Project Manager to closely monitor this. The DfE have agreed to roll forward a sum of £1.8million to the next financial year. Further funding extensions are required and these will be discussed at the next meeting of the IoT Sub Group. Most of the orders for equipment have now been placed but there is still a considerable amount to get over the line. It has been known for some time that all invoices need to be submitted by 5th April 2022 and the Deputy Principal Finance and Resources has requested that all orders are placed by the end of February.

The Principal advised that Neil Brayshaw has started as Interim Managing Director of the IoT.

130. Any other business – none raised.

131. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5th April 2022 at 4.00pm

132. Confidential minutes of the last meeting held on 30th November 2021 –

133. Funding update – confidential minutes refer.

134. Savings plan – confidential minutes refer.

135. Integration update – confidential minutes refer.