

THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF CORPORATE SERVICES MEETING 11.03. 2024

PRESENT: J Castor (Chair, CG), S Brown (CO), R Davies (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), D Lusardi (CG), S Mirsalehi (CG), A Pajura-Jaszczak (Staff Governor), P Sharp (CG).

OFFICERS: P Bland (Strategic Project Manager), (Z Foster (Clerk), K Parkinson (VP), S Marshall (VP), M Russell – (VP).

For Item 10 – P Blewitt (AP), M Telling (Dir.), A Waller Amos (Dir.).

Key: CG – College Governor CO – Co-opted Governor VP – Vice Principal
CTO – Chief Technology Officer AP – Assistant Principal

1. Apologies for Absence

I Anwar (CG), M Lamb (CG), R Shuttleworth (CTO).

2. Declarations of Interest – no declarations noted.

3. Unconfirmed Minutes of 11 December 2023 – were approved as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising – M Russell to share password for dashboard.

Other items complete or in progress at relevant update points in year.

5. Strategic Overview

5.1 Principal/Chief Executive's Verbal Overview and Risk Summary

Z Lewis drew out the key risks on the register for the Committee to be appraised of and test throughout the meeting including:

- finance (raised at Audit and Risk in respect of last week's budget and potential impact/spread for education particularly with the raft of post 16 strategies, 16-18 allocations, and changing demographics) and the initial plan for the gradual build of cash reserves and reasons why
- multiple factors related to the TTE relocation (including various staff considerations (both direct and related); and increase in recruitment)
- Post 16 qualification reform including Advanced British Standard (and associated expectations on Maths and English);
- 100 Russell Street's varying moving parts

Clarification was sought on the budget for the new school build despite the delay.

Z Lewis also updated the Committee on the new Employer Voice group, chaired by S Lane (and involving some members of this Committee and new VP G Potts), the first meeting of which would take place 26 June 2024.

5.2 Strategic Projects Update including TTE Update and summary of Health and Safety reportables and dilapidations Update

P Bland gave a comprehensive update including: TTE – general progress against plans (build and budget); health and safety incident statistics; STEM adaptations progress and timeline; and LSIP and Levelling up projects update (and related budget).

M Russell detailed the projected capital profile of the projects (including grants split which was highlighted in the financial plan). **Further action** by M Russell to give granular detail for July meeting in respect of capital funds and split across the projects.

S Marshall updated in respect of TTE delays which was discussed in full by the Committee including potential engagement of an independent real estates consultant to support negotiations once the report had been fully considered.

The potential carparking acquisitions were also discussed with some good progress being made in some areas (albeit not for the larger plot). Z Lewis confirmed that any formal legal developments would be shared with S

Brown ahead of further movement.

It was acknowledged that temporary parking would be required to accommodate the TTE move with various options being highlighted.

Additional discussion and questions included: contractor performance including examples of good practice; how the new build enabled additional teaching and learning opportunities; clarification on the mezzanines build; and energy efficiencies on new build (including use of the solar panels for the running of the College).

It was **agreed** that Governors could visit the new build at the Strategic Planning Day on 11 May 2024 .

6. Finance Matters 2023-2024

6.1 Financial Planning high Level considerations including Financial Health

M Russell gave a comprehensive overview of the key considerations for budgeting and planning 2024-25 and an indicative picture for the coming three years (rather than the usual five due to levels of uncertainty within FE/wider economy) all of which would maintain good financial health and by the end of the plan build up cash balances to align with the FE Commissioner's 30 day benchmark. A more detailed budget, after the curriculum and business planning processes, would come to the July meeting for approval.

Discussion and questions focussed on the above and included: income growth and related prudence; pay award; clarification on in-year lagged funding triggers; potential impact of Adult delivery changes on students (in and outwith the area); process for bullet payment (as yet not determined by DfE); update on VAT case; carparking reflections in budget once finalised; recruitment figures and possible class size efficiencies; Adult Education funding sensitivities; staff pay; the new HR system; NI clarification for employers; Eton update; staff recruitment and retention; and staff surveying update and IIP accreditation process.

Z Lewis confirmed that after a period of detailed internal considerations, further plans for a number of key areas (including TTE International, Apprenticeships, SEN and HE) would come to the May Strategic Planning Day

6.2 Management Accounts December 2023

M Russell gave a brief summary which showed a high level of confidence that the budgeted breakeven result for the year would be achieved.

The recently announced Tees Valley Investment Zone to support creative and digital companies was discussed in respect of future possible opportunities for bids (albeit there was little detail known at this stage).

6.3 Subcontractors Update

M Russell gave a brief summary of quality and delivery for the three current subcontractors.

The local employer /recruitment climate was discussed more widely by the Committee.

7. Campus Update

7.1 Campus - S Marshall drew out a number of key areas from her report including: health and safety incidents (low); the conditions report outcomes; security; business continuity exercises and developments; lease updates; legal matters; and the substantial outcome on the recent Business Continuity audit (RSM).

J Castor, on behalf of the Committee, congratulated the team on the outcome of the audit.

Vaping deterrents and wider drug monitoring was discussed. Eco printer savings were also discussed.

7.2 – Energy Report – S Marshall gave a summary of the report outlining the complexities to be able to accurately share 'like for like' usage. She also highlighted positive progress in relation to the water quality issues in Digital.

Energy use across the campus buildings (including TTE) was discussed in full.

7.3 – Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan – S Marshall gave an update which included the new screens; reusable water bottles; staff and student training and activity and the District Heating project revival.

Governors discussed: the detail of the District heat pump; food prices; and the possible expansion of the use of solar panels across the campus.

Approval was then given for the publication of the of the SECR data report 2022-2023 for the College website

8. Digital Services Update

S Marshall gave a brief update on the Windows 11 rollout, new laptops; and detail of the work of the Digital Transformation group.

Governors discussed the re-issue /depreciation of student devices; the current use of AI and expected DfE guidance; and the greater flexibilities and benefits of the use of personal devices within the College

9. Human Resources and Workforce Development

K Parkinson outlined an improved picture for staff turnover generally except for business support; the appointment of a new Recruitment Business Partner and her remit; the new HR system introduction and progress; Ofsted inspection in relation to Safer Recruitment (which was very positive), harmonization considerations and related work including priority areas of focus; and the forthcoming IIP accreditation process.

Discussion focussed on harmonisation options and priorities (including holiday pay); IIP timeline; and external reviews sites.

10. Business Development

10.1 Marketing and Communications Update

A Waller Amos gave a comprehensive account of student recruitment and marketing and communication activities since the last meeting. She also detailed the positive impact of increased communication with parents within the admissions process; and the forthcoming PR campaign post Ofsted (post publication of the report).

Questions and discussion included: events for the new TTE build; engineering applications and staffing considerations; and recruitment across the provisions more widely.

Governors were invited to the Student Awards Ceremony on 14 May 2024.

10.2 Employer Engagement Update

M Telling gave an update in respect of apprenticeship starts; networking activity and employer engagement events.

10.3 International Update

M Telling updated Governors generally with M Russell providing the budgetary information for the current year.

Governors had a full discussion in relation to TTE International which included: the priorities (with TTE relocation being the first focus), progress; opportunities; and the constraints of Managing Public Money (MPM) going forward.

It was **agreed** that this would be considered at the May Strategy Day

11. Committee Review of Top Risks

The Committee reviewed the risks again and agreed the following key areas of risk:

- TTE staffing
- TTE relocation
- International
- Watch on Recruitment/Applications (due to complex and unusual profile)

12. Date and Time of 2024 meetings

- Monday 8 July 2024 at 2pm

13. Any other Business

None taken

The meeting ended at 4.58pm