

THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE

Confirmed Minutes of Corporate Services Committee Meeting of 08 March 2019

- PRESENT:** R Davies (CG and Chair), A Allen (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Exec), P Studd (CG), A Waller-Amos (Staff Governor), S Wilson (EM).
- OFFICERS:** Z Foster (Clerk) C Kipling (VP), J Steel (VP), A Stephenson (Dir), A Wond (Exec. Dir).
- Key:** CG – College Governor, EM – External Member, VP – Vice Principal, Dir – Director of HR, Exec. Dir – Executive Director.

1. Apologies for Absence – no apologies

R Davies informed the Committee that once approved at the Governing Body meeting of 21 March 2019, Heather Ashton would be joining the Committee.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 10.12.2018 – approved and signed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

4.3 Northern Apprenticeship Company Director Status. This was discussed by the Committee and **agreed** that the current arrangement was sufficient in light of other controls in place and high level financial information being scrutinised in detail by this Committee, Audit and Risk and also by External Auditors.

6.1 – Gender Pay Gap Reporting - A Stephenson verbally reported on this under Item 6.1

All other actions had been completed.

4. Strategic Overview and Financial Statements

4.1 Principal/Chief Executive's Update – Z Lewis

Z Lewis gave a full overview including a budget update and detailed discussion took place in relation to:

4.1.1 – Site Disposals Update – exchange timescales and other uncertainties. Section 106 deductions had been agreed in principal. Z Lewis also updated the Committee on the wider local political situation which could potentially impact on the project.

4.1.2 – IoT Update –Z Lewis updated the Committee. Final decisions should be known within 6 weeks.

Governors discussed the complexities and risk of the two intertwined projects including consideration of timing, demographics, the Augar review, local and national factors.

Z Lewis would keep the Corporate Services Committee updated and it was supportive of the considered approach being taken to the two interlinked strategic projects.

5. Finance Matters 2018-2019

5.1 Financial Health Update – C Kipling

C Kipling updated the Committee with information from the National Finance Conference early in 2019, where it was confirmed that the ESF would not be introducing any changes this year. In addition, the College's financial position had been improved, with cautious optimism that this could be restored to 'good' by year end.

Governors discussion and questioning included: the likely future tightening of financial grading; the College's prudent saving regime; the College's cashflow situation and the wider political climate regarding insolvency, accountability and the effect on colleges; contingencies, facilities costing, forecasting and possible future options for spend if budget allowed (e.g. perception study).

Governors **agreed** that further consideration regarding any additional spend or borrowing would be discussed on 4 July 2019 meeting once the financial picture was more certain.

5.2 Management Accounts – January 2019 – C Kipling

The Management Accounts were received and would form part of the Governing Body's papers for 21 March 2019. C Kipling drew attention to the ESFA funding 2019-2020 allocation which had been better than forecasted and could improve further subject to a successful business case on deprivation factors.

Governors discussed the robustness of the systems in place; apprenticeships, adults including any likely effect of devolution; HE and lessons learnt, HE class sizes and the complexities of this; local demographics; adult developments and curriculum areas generally; cash flow monitoring and the College operating system. Action by C Kipling – to present a normal distribution curve for class sizes for HE for Committee.

5.3 VAT Update – C Kipling

C Kipling gave an update with confirmation that there had been limited progress since the last update

Governors discussed settlements, and queried possible fines (none due to appeal) and fees.

6. Human Resources and Workforce Development

Gender Pay Gap Report 2018 (Matters Arising 4.3) - A Stephenson updated governors on the Gender Pay Gap query from the meeting of 10 December 2018 and Governors debated various aspects of the reporting.

6.1 Human Resources Term 1 Report 2018-2019 – A Stephenson

The Human Resources Term 1 Report 2018-2019 was presented. A Stephenson highlighted that a review of recruitment was currently taking place to improve the speed of recruitment whilst ensuring a robust process was maintained.

Wellbeing (including a reduction in absence), ethnic ratios including work being done with Y Khan and the Equality Group to improve this in the longer term, sickness; occupational health improvements and casework were key discussion points.

Additionally, **the Staff Survey** results were presented (verbally and tabled) by Z Lewis who gave a full overview and confirmed that overall results had improved with much to build on with Departments and teams.

Governors discussed terms and conditions, good practice and the wider national challenge within the education system in relation to staff morale and the survey findings more widely.

6.2 People Strategy Draft - A Stephenson and J Steel

A full update was given. The draft had been fully consulted upon and many of the initiatives were being driven by staff and specialist groups of staff. J Steel updated governors on the Time to Change campaign and actions (Mental Health and Wellbeing) which was being launched at the Staff Conference in April. Any additional ideas from governors would be welcome.

Governors debated the challenging measures of success and queried college systems in place which supported counselling and other wellbeing activities and how the People Strategy fit in with the wider Strategic Plan.

The Committee agreed to recommend the People Strategy document for approval by the Governing Body at its meeting of 21 March 2019

7. Facilities Management Update – A Wond

A full update given by A Wond.

The following aspects were questioned and discussed in full by the Committee: the complexities and possible solutions in relation to energy consumption management; premises costs; latent defects works; CHP scheme

and commitment level and the overall capital programme costs and priorities to ensure a risk appropriate approach whilst there were some unknown outcomes for the overall budget.

8. IT Update – A Wond

A full IT update was presented including an update on IT projects.

Governors were pleased with the progress with Cyber Essential Certification and Disaster Recovery provision. The need to continue to invest in future innovations within the IT system was discussed in detail.

The Committee asked A Wond to ensure a clear priority order was developed for works in relation to Facilities and IT. Action by A Wond (and wider SLT team as appropriate).

9. Capital Budget 2019-2020 – C Kipling/Z Lewis

The Committee discussed the Capital Budget in some detail. Due to the volatility and uncertainty of future income in some areas it was agreed that a prudent approach be taken.

After considerable discussion, the **Corporate Services Committee agreed to recommend** to the Governing Body, at its meeting on the 21 March 2019, that the capital programme spend for 2019/20 was risk managed as follows:

- Approval is given to commit £500,000 of capital investment for 2019 / 2020 pre-enrolment but with cash being committed after 1st August (new financial year) in order to commence priority projects before September 2019.
- That the remainder of the capital programme (to a maximum of £750,000 totaling an overall investment of £1,250,00) be brought back to the Governing Body for sign off before being committed, this sign off being subject to a satisfactory enrolment and 2018/19 financial year end.

10. Recruitment, Admissions and Sales Update – C Kipling and A Waller-Amos

The report was received and debate focused on: admissions 2019-20 which was up in all areas; marketing strategies including an increasingly successful schools programme; popularity of the hybrid post 16 offer (A Levels and vocational), social media strategy and developing the alumni in a number of ways; HE – offers; recruitment and ‘What Uni’ Choice Awards nomination; and work experience for T Levels.

Agreed that future reports would be simplified with reference to the Management Accounts rather than duplicating information and be of a forward focused nature. Action by C Kipling and report writing team

11. Date of Next Meetings – R Davies

11.1 Thursday 4th July 2019 at 2pm

12. Any other Urgent Business – none taken

ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED

ITEM	ACTION	BY WHOM	DEADLINE
5.2	Show a normal distribution curve for HE class sizes (Management Accounts)	C Kipling	For meeting of 04.07.19
6.2	Ideas in relation to mental health and wellbeing initiatives for staff	Committee	Asap - to fit in with April launch
7/8	Ensure priority list for both Facilities and IT is developed in line with Capital budget approval	A Wond/SLT	Asap – to report 04.07.19
10	Simplify report for Recruitment, Admissions and Sales with ‘future’ focus	C Kipling and report team	For meeting of 04.07.19

The meeting closed at 4.40 pm