

THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE 06.07. 2020

PRESENT: P Studd (Chair, CG), H Ashton (CG), R Davies (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), S Mirsalehi (CG), P Sharp (CG), D Wade (Staff Governor).

OFFICERS: Z Foster (Clerk), C Kipling (VP), K Parkinson (ED), A Wond (ED).

KEY: CG – College Governor EM – External Member
VP – Vice Principal ED Executive Director

1. Apologies for Absence

T Parkinson (CG), S Wilson (EM).

2. **Unconfirmed Minutes of 13 March 2020** - approved as a correct record.

3. **Unconfirmed Minutes of Special Meeting of 23 June 2020** - approved as a correct record.

4. **Matters Arising from either Meeting** – no matters arising.

5. Strategic Overview

5.1 Principal/Chief Executive's Verbal Update

Z Lewis outlined the expected effect of Covid on the College budget, detailing the complexities both in relation to commercial streams and protected funding. In addition, she reminded the Committee of an expected Government White paper in the Autumn which could bring major changes to the sector. The update to the T Level bid and an additional FE capital fund was also explained in full. Z Lewis also updated the Committee on IoT progress and timelines for T Level bid outcomes.

P Bland (Strategic Project Manager) would be invited to future Corporate Services Committee meetings to keep the Committee abreast of developments on all of the current strategic projects.

Governors' discussion included: the potential impact of local transport on students return; financial health considerations; possible revenue funds as a result of the Chancellor's 8 July announcement; Towns Fund update including fund matching rules and related plans; digital poverty; and possible improvements for social spaces/car parking as a result of plans.

5.2 Covid Personal Device Strategy 2020

A Wond presented the approach to IT initially raised in December 2019, for both staff and students, which had been accelerated due to Covid. He detailed the effects on the Capital Replacement programme with the movement away from domain technology and outlined the approach for staff and learners and the options available to support students in low income households.

The Committee's questions and discussion included: undisclosed potential home Wifi issues for students; data protection and data storage for staff; protections in relation to downloading unauthorised software and protections/liabilities in relation to the College system; staff training; affordability for students/families outwith the bursary scheme and wider equality of access; and the ability for students to buy devices from the College.

6. Finance Matters 2019-2020

6.1 Five year Financial Plan

C Kipling gave a detailed overview including: changes to the ESFA reporting requirements for the July return; updates to the May accounts; TTE position, reasoning behind key assumptions; maintaining good Financial Health and the College's position to respond to future uncertainties.

Governors' questions and discussion included: the operating surplus; EBITDA; pay award clarification; and the possible effects of the various enrolment outcomes.

It was agreed it was a prudent plan but would need to be kept under review due to the current volatile environment created by Covid. The Committee agreed to recommend for approval by the Governing Body at its meeting on 16 July 2020.

6.2 ESFA Financial Statements Letter 2018-2019

The formal letter received from the ESFA which ratified statements and records presented in December 2019 as 'good' was for information.

6.3 Management Accounts (May 2020)

A full overview was given with regard to the May position.

Discussion and questions included: TTE acquisition costs; Financial Health; Lead Auditor advice; and a possible further review if required.

6.4 Contracts Update

C Kipling informed the Committee that no new partners were being recommended and therefore approval for 2020/21 was for the current subcontractors.

Clarification and reassurance was given in respect of one subcontractor.

The Committee agreed to recommend for approval by the Governing Body at its meeting on 16 July 2020

6.5 Fees Policy 2020-2021

It was outlined by C Kipling who informed the Committee that this was an annual refresh with no major changes proposed.

The Committee agreed to recommend for approval by the Governing Body at its meeting on 16 July 2020.

7. Capital Budget 2020-2021

The Capital Budget for 2020-21 was outlined by C Kipling who explained the rebalance which was due to the Personal Device strategy. Additionally, the Committee were appraised that further campus improvements could be forthcoming should the Towns Fund bid be realised.

The Committee agreed to recommend for approval by the Governing Body at its meeting of 16 July 2020.

8. Human Resources and Workforce Development

8.1 People Strategy and Action Plan – progress against plan – K Parkinson presented her report which detailed progress against the key KPIs and 6 strands of the People Strategy. She outlined the positive progress over the last six months and of current activities.

Questions and discussion included: the significant improvement in staff satisfaction (89%); positive staff engagement during lockdown; Staff Council role and feedback; and progress on the small staff restructure.

Governors approved of the new style of reporting and were impressed by progress so far.

9. IT and Estates Update

A full update was given by A Wond highlighting the changes to IT support during lockdown; an update on the fire stopping works, an update on 2QS; energy consumption and compliance.

The Committee gave their thanks and congratulations to the whole Estates and IT Teams for their incredibly hard work, both over shutdown and in preparation for opening.

10. Recruitment, Admissions and Sales Update

C Kipling gave an update on all aspects of recruitment and sales which were reflected in the May Accounts.

Discussion involved consideration of school leaver demographics locally and related recruitment to the College and local apprenticeship recruitment in light of Covid.

11. TTE Update

S Marshall gave an overview of both international and commercial activities and of the complexities under Covid restrictions. She also updated the Committee on the transition of TTE with the College which was going well.

Questions and discussion included: the prudent budget; TTE Peterlee site update; International training, Health and Safety and wider support when learners are in the UK.

The Committee thanked S Marshall for the comprehensive update.

12. Date and Time of Meetings for 2020-2021

The dates of the meetings were noted.

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 7th December 2020 at 2pm.

13. Any other Urgent Business

a) Updates on the Capital plans and enrolment would be given at the Strategic Planning Day in September.

b) Post Meeting Note: An additional recommendation was agreed for approval by the Chair of Corporate Services for the Governing Body meeting of 16 July 2020 (and is documented within the Corporate Services Recommendations for that meeting) in relation to releasing T Level bid related professional fees.

The meeting ended at 5.25pm