

**THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE  
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE 13.12. 2021**

**PRESENT:** P Studd (Chair, CG), R Davies (CG), M Ellis (Staff Governor); Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), P Sharp (CG), S Wilson (EM).

**OFFICERS:** P Bland (Strategic Project Manager), Z Foster (Clerk), K Parkinson (ED), S Marshall (ED), P Moody (Dir.), M Russell – VP Finance and Registry M Telling – Group Director Business Engagement and Partnerships R Shuttleworth (Dir.).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** D Lusardi (future CG) as observer

**KEY:** CG – College Governor            EM – External Member  
VP – Vice Principal                    ED - Executive Director            Dir. - Director

**1. Apologies for Absence** – H Ashton (CG), S Mirsalehi (CG), A Waller Amos (Dir.).

P Studd welcomed D Lusardi to the Committee.

**2. Declarations of Interest** – no declarations noted.

**3. Unconfirmed Minutes of 5 July 2021** - approved as a correct record.

**4. Matters Arising**– no matters arising not on the agenda.

**5. Strategic Overview**

**5.1 Principal/Chief Executive’s Verbal Update**

Z Lewis gave a brief overview of key items including: the financial position and detail of some movement and explanations (including enrolment and progression) in 2021-22; Digital Strategy; Employer Engagement Strategy and progress in relation to the People Strategy.

**5.2 Strategic Projects Update**

P Bland detailed in full the live status of the current projects for the Committee including detail on any delays, risks and budget updates.

Discussion and questions included: impact of delays including any potential penalties; clarification on any additional costs on current projects; grounds surveys and potential impacts on some schemes; and a detailed discussion on the TTE development, including current status, risks and associated costs.

It was confirmed that P Bland would share the detail of the Stage 3 costs in relation to TTE as soon as they were available for the Committee. Also, that on receipt of the outcome by the DfE (likely March) the scheme would come back to the Governing Body for full consideration.

**6. Finance Matters 2021-2022**

**6.1 Financial Statements 2020-2021**

M Russell gave an overview of the six sets of accounts presented for approval to the Governing Body. He also detailed the External Audit process and confirmed that all Audit work would be completed ahead of 16 December 2021 approval.

The Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Governing Body at its meeting on 16 December 2021 the 2020/2021 Financial Statements (*Items 6.1.1-6.1.6 - Middlesbrough College, Northern Skills Group Limited, Northern Apprenticeship Group Limited, TTE Technical (UK) Ltd, TTE International Ltd and TTE Apprenticeships Ltd*) for approval, prior to them being signed and returned to the Education and Skills Funding Agency before the 31 December 2021 deadline.

## 6.2 Bank Loan and Treasury Management Annual Report

M Russell presented the annual report and updated the Committee on the bank loan status position and proposal going forward.

The Corporate Services Committee **approved**:

- Delegated Authority to Mike Russell, Vice Principal Finance and Registry, in consultation with Zoe Lewis, Principal and Chief Executive, to execute the LIBOR Transition Agreement Amendment, moving the College's interest charge from a LIBOR reference rate to SONIA
- maintaining the current variable interest rate arrangements on existing banking facilities pending a detailed review of overall facilities following future decisions in relation to the FEETF grant and TTE premises relocation.
- the 2020 / 2021 Treasury Management Annual Report.

## 6.3 Pay Award 2021-2022

M Russell detailed the rationale for the proposed agreement, which had been accounted for within the budget.

Governors' discussed: the rate of award; the AoC recommended award (not confirmed) and potential future pressures.

After detailed consideration of the College's financial position, the Corporate Services Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Governing Body at its meeting of 16 December 2021, the following for all staff:

- A 3% consolidated pay increase from 1st January 2022 for all staff (including hourly contract 1 rates) subject to meeting the relevant performance criteria
- that the Living Wage increase be honoured from April 2022.

## 6.4 Bad Debts

M Russell set out the bad debt position for 2020 / 2021 and the proposed write-off.

Governors discussed the potential for increased debts with the introduction of the Digital Strategy and associated devices (4000+). Further detail would come to the March 2022 meeting.

The Committee **agreed** to recommend the write off of £3,384 for 2020-2021 for irrecoverable debts to the Governing Body at its meeting of 16 December 2021.

## 6.5 Student Union Activity

The Corporate Services Committee received this report and **agreed** to recommend that the 2020 / 2021 Student Union Activity be approved by the Governing Body at its meeting of 16 December 2021.

## 6.6 Financial Regulations Annual Update

The Committee **endorsed** the changes outlined by M Russell and **approved** the revised documentation.

## **6.7 Overseas Trips**

M Russell reported that there had been no overseas trips taken in 2020-21.

## **6.8 Education and Skills Financial Assessment**

M Russell informed the Committee that this had been as anticipated and drew attention to the useful benchmarking data.

## **6.9 Management Accounts (October 2021)**

M Russell -drew attention to key aspects of the Management Accounts and briefly drew attention to changes in the funding policy and rates for subsequent years.

The Committee asked for detail on underfunded provision and any potential material impact going forward, which was explained in full by M Russell.

The Committee **approved** the Accounts for dissemination to the Governing Body on 16 December 2021.

## **6.10 Subcontractors Update**

M Russell outlined the good progress within the subcontractor deliveries and reminded the Committee of changes for 2021-22 which was discussed.

## **6.11 International Update**

S Marshall appraised the Committee on international progress and Covid related challenges.

# **7. Human Resources and Workforce Development**

## **7.1 Human Resources Annual Summary Report 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 Plans and Priorities**

K Parkinson gave a comprehensive account of the summary report both retrospectively for 2020-21 and plans for 2021-22 which included: Taking Wellbeing Higher; Workforce Development (including a new manager for the team); the recent Payroll audit; and additional progress and initiatives.

Governors' discussion and questions included: 2021-22 priorities; harmonisation work and timelines; the successful transfer of payroll; and overall good progress within the HR area.

# **8. Digital and Campus Services Update**

S Marshall gave an update of the campus drawing attention to Storm Arwen damage and actions; Co2 monitoring and Net Zero Carbon.

Governors' discussion focussed on energy cost patterns and energy procurement activities.

## **8.1 IT and Digital Strategy**

R Shuttleworth gave a brief overview of the IT Department then outlined the Digital Strategy which had already been received and discussed by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Governors' discussion and questions included: disaster recovery centre and future options; disaster recovery more widely and increased resilience; back up system and processes; service operations and related upskilling plans; and clarification on pen testing wordpress issue.

In relation to the Digital Strategy, governors asked for clearer linkage to Teaching and Learning within the strategy (though it was acknowledged that this detail was also within the Taking Teaching Higher Strategy); the ambitious nature of the strategy and reasoning behind the speed

of the transformation; related cultural change and support for staff and students over the next few months.

It was **agreed** that at the March meeting Governors would be presented with a view of the learner's journey and what this might look like in 2025 by J Wells who was co-leading on the implementation of the strategy.

The Committee **agreed to approve** the Strategy, subject to minor amends, and that a future update would occur as it developed.

## **9. Business Development**

### **9.1 Marketing and Communications Update**

Z Lewis gave a brief overview on progress and areas of action for the Marketing Team.

### **9.2 Enrolment and Market Share Analysis**

P Moody gave a full review of enrolment 2021-22 and detailed information in relation to Market Share for 2020-21 and of the number of learners in learning which had dropped in the region.

Governors discussed possible reasons for the decline in learners particularly in relation to NEETs but also possible greater employment opportunities.

### **9.3 Employer Engagement Strategy**

M Telling presented the draft strategy highlighting the review of the commercial function across the group and resulting short and long term plans and actions for this cross-college strategy. He also drew attention to the KPIs within the strategy.

Governors' discussion and questions included: current baseline on satisfaction rates and related Corporate KPIs; Marketing and PR activities; the Employer Advisory Groups; and aspects of the new CRM system and its roll out.

After consideration and suggested additions, it was **agreed** that the Strategy would go to the Governing Body for approval on 16 December 2021.

## **10. Date and Time of Next Meetings**

**10.1 Monday 14 March 2022 at 2pm**

**10.2 Monday 4 July 2022 at 2pm (Joint meeting with GB)**

**11. Any other Urgent Business** – none taken.

**12. Members Discussion** – not taken.

*The meeting ended at 5.10pm*