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| **MINUTES** | | | | | | |
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| *Finance & Resources No 42* | | | | | | |
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| Date: |  | *28/02/2023 (Tuesday)* |  | Time: |  | *18:00–20:00* |
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| Venue: |  | *Rural Business Centre* |  | Committee: |  | *Finance and Resources* |
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| Present: |  | *Alison Robinson (Principal), Allan Foster, David Hall, Rosie Bryson (Co-opted Member) and Sue Collinge (Chair)* | | | | |
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| Attending: |  | *Janet Whiteside (Director of Finance), Joanne Sherrington (Deputy Principal), John Wherry (Deputy Principal) and Steven Downham-Clarke (Vice Principal)* | | | | |
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| Clerks: |  | *Ron Matthews (Clerk)* | | | | |
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| Apologies: |  | *Clare James (Vice Chair)* | | | | |
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| ***Public* Minutes** | |
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| Item number: | Item description: |
| (and category) |  |
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| **01.23** | ***Attendance of College Management*** |
| ***Decision*** | Section 8.2 of the current Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Finance & Resources Committee states:  College management and/or consultants may attend meetings by invitation in an advisory capacity.  **Resolved:**  **That College Management Staff attend the meeting.** |
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| **02.23** | ***Apologies for Absence*** |
| ***Record*** | Apologies for absence had been received from Clare James. |
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| **03.23** | ***Minutes of Previous Meeting*** |
| ***Decision*** | The public minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meeting number 41 held on 29 November 2022, published on the extranet, were agreed and signed as a true and correct representation of the meeting. |
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| **04.23** | ***Declarations of Interest*** |
| ***Record*** | There were no declarations of interest made in respect of items on the public agenda. |
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| **05.23** | ***Strategic Plan Progress Report*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee considered the report of the Principal on the progress of the Strategic Plan.  Whilst FE and HE numbers were below budget as previously reported, Apprenticeships was strong against a national trend of an overall 6% reduction in applications. The provision of 14-16 year olds was buoyant.  Sickness levels were increasing and currently slightly above the AoC benchmark, although an Employee Assistance Programme had recently been introduced.  Commercial activity was looking stronger following a decline during the pandemic.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **06.23** | ***Financial Position Statement for the Period Ended 31 December 2022*** |
| ***Decision*** | |  | | --- | | The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, on the financial performance up to 31 December 2022 as presented by the Director of Finance.  The actual loss of £236k was £135k behind the control budget and £150k behind forecast, mainly due to HE numbers being below target. Work was continuing to reduce the identified loss before the end of the financial year.  Staff costs as a percentage of income was above the target of 58% standing at 61.1%.  At period end both cash balances of £13.323m and 145 cash days remained very strong.  Current finances and staff costs were below the FE Commissioner's financial benchmarking targets although the financial grade remained good.  Apprenticeship numbers and income remained positive with the Farm performing slightly better than budget.  As part of the finance report reference was made to the announcement by the ONS that colleges would be transferred to the public sector. A report on this matter appeared later on the agenda.  Following questions from Governors it was:  **Resolved** |   **That the report be received.** |
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| **07.23** | ***Strategic Risk Register*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee considered the Strategic Risk Report for 2022/2023 as presented by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services.  Included were references to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map.  The report identified the top five risks for the College. Financial stability and Cyber Security remained two of the main risks identified.  A recent Internal Audit review of the risk register highlighted the need to provide Governor training for Governors. This would be arranged in the near future.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **08.23** | ***Reclassification of Colleges - ONS Update*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, on the reclassification of Colleges. The Department for Education was issuing bite sized guidance on various elements within the revised protocols.  The report included notification on Special Payments, Novel, Contentious and Repercussive Payments, Indemnities and Guarantees, Write Offs and Senior Pay Controls.  The Deputy Principal was also exploring the potential impact on the College's current loan agreements.  The Department was likely to issue a new Financial Handbook for colleges in the future in line with a similar product currently available for academies.  Circulated with the report was an article produced by RSM, the Colleges Financial Statement Auditors, on the possible implications of the decision.  **Resolved:**  **That the reports be received.** |
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| **09.23** | ***Financial Regulations Annual Review*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, on a review of the Financial Regulations.  The Financial Regulations required reviewing on an annual basis and the changes to the previous version of the document had been highlighted. These included amendments needed as a result of the decision of the Office for National Statistics for Colleges to revert to the public sector.  Due to level of amendments to the document it was  **Resolved:**  **That the Corporation be recommended to adopt the revised Financial Regulations with effect from 1 April 2023.** |
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| **10.23** | ***HE Policy and Procedure, Bursary Policy and Tuition Fees 2023/2024*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee gave consideration to the proposed Higher Education Policy and Procedure, Bursary Policy and Tuition Fees for 2023/2024. To ensure compliance Myerscough was required to work with UCLan to agree the fee structure for new entrants in 2023/2024 as part of the Access Agreement and also in line with the requirements of the Office for Students.  The review of the Bursary Policy and student support package remained similar to last year.  The College current recommendations were based on the existing fee cap of £9,250 for full time students.  The report included a summary of the fees including part time and international students.  **Resolved:**  **The HE Policy and Procedure, Bursary Policy and Tuition Fees 2023/2024 be agreed.** |
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| **11.23** | ***Human Resources for the Period Ended 31 January 2023*** |
| ***Decision*** | |  | | --- | | The Committee considered the above report which contained analysis of staff turnover, breakdown analysis of leavers, staff stability index and staff sickness statistics for the year up to 31 January 2023. |   The Committee noted staff turnover – the percentage of workers who leave – was 18.55% for all staff, 17.5% for management staff, 18.64% for teaching staff and 20% for support staff. As a comparison during the same period last year, staff turnover was 14.6% for all staff, 2.4% for management staff, 12.8% for teaching staff and 16.41% for support staff.  Current staff turnover was slightly above the national average for colleges which stood at 17.8%, for the North West the average staff turnover was 17.6%.  For the last quarter the College supported 146 vacancies, an increase of 33 compared to the last quarter.  Absence was measured by the average number of working days lost per employee and the lost time percentage, which was a measure of the proportion of available working time lost due to absence during the year. The average number of working days lost due to sickness at the College was 5.87 and the lost time percentage was 2.26%. For the same period last year, the average number of working days lost due to sickness at the College was 5.63 and the lost time percentage was 2.17%. There were 6 staff absent, long term, at the end of the reporting period compared with 5 staff at the same reporting period for the previous year. Sickness absence remains reasonably static in all categories at this time and is within the average for the sector.  Mentioned in the report was the Gender Pay Gap report - March 2022. The College was required to publish the report for the period 1.4.2021 – 31.03.2022 by the end of March 2023.  The College median pay gap (middle) had increased by 3.5% (26.47% median pay gap). The mean pay gap (average) had increased by 1.98% (13.66% mean pay gap). The increase was due, in the main, to an increase in female employees in the lower quartiles of the workforce. The report highlighted areas of focus for the year ahead which, it was hoped, over the long term, would serve to reduce the pay gap.  The report also included details of training being undertaken together with the introduction wellbeing support for staff.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **12.23** | ***Health and Safety Report for the Period Ended 31 January 2023*** |
| ***Decision*** | |  | | --- | | Members gave consideration to the Health and Safety Report for the period ended 31 January 2023 which provided an analysis of accident statistics over the period, together with other Health and Safety activities including policy updates, staff training, free health checks, auditing and inspections.  Overall, accidents had increased from 100 to 105 when compared with the same period last year. This number was now levelling out post Covid. There were 2 RIDDOR reportable accidents during the period making a total of 3 for the year and, at 1.75%, was below the target of less than 3%.  Analysis indicated that the 105 accidents involved 7 staff and 97 students and 1 visitor –  9 (9%) were taken to hospital - 6 Students, 1 Apprentice, 1 Visitor and 1 Contractor  65 (61%) received first aid treatment  31 (30%) needed no treatment  There were no areas of significant concern.  The report included details of recent audits, training and drills.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** | |
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