

MINUTES

Finance & Resources No 47

Date: 26/06/2024 (Wednesday)

Time: 18:00–20:00

Venue: *Via Teams*

Committee: *Finance and Resources*

Present: *Karen Dewhurst, Sue Collinge (Chair) and Wes Johnson (Principal)*

Attending: *Janet Whiteside (Director of Finance), Joanne Sherrington (Vice Principal) and John Wherry (Deputy Principal)*

Clerks: *Ron Matthews (Clerk)*

Guests: *Elton Dsouza*

Public Minutes

Item number:
(and category)

Item description:

01.24

Decision

Attendance of College Management

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.

02.24

Record

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Jane Booker and David Hall.

03.24

Decision

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The public minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meeting number 46 held on Wednesday 13 March 2024, published on the extranet, were agreed and signed as a true and correct representation of the meeting.

04.24

Record

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made in respect of items on the public agenda.

05.24

Decision

Strategic Plan Progress Report

The Committee considered the Strategic Plan Progress Report for the Finance and Resources Committee. The key performance indicators related to income, the Capital Plan, Human Resources Statistics and Financial Performance. The report was based on the Strategic Goals of People and Sustainability. The majority of performance indicators were above, on or just below target. The targets under People related to staff and student satisfaction. The 30 hours CPD for teaching staff stood at 38% which was well below the target of 95%, although the target would be reviewed for next year. Overall student feedback provided strong positive views apart from the use of the virtual learning environment. The remaining financial indicators were on target although the HE numbers target had been reduced from the previous year. Recruitment to FE was above target. The Capital Plan was anticipated to be delivered within target.

Resolved: That the report be received.

06.24

Financial Position Statement for the Period Ended 30 April 2024

Decision

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Finance on financial performance up to 31 January 2024. The current position was a loss of £354k with significant work still to be undertaken to ensure the forecast of £28k was met. This loss had increased by £77k during the month but the variance behind forecast remained consistent at £421k. Apprenticeship income was behind profile but the team were confident of reaching forecast. Delivery of AEB contracts and other devolved funding was continuing to plan. Commercial income was strong although the margin had been impacted by the pay increase. The loss on the farm was currently £207k against a forecast loss of £161k and a budget loss of £66k. The Deputy Principal, Resources, reported that the loss on the farm was due to issues with the dairy herd and were proving difficult to resolve. A recruitment freeze has been implemented for all new posts as a response to the requirement to reduce staff costs and all subsequent replacement posts would continue to be scrutinised. Work on non-pay savings continued. The pay award for the next academic year had been agreed as 1% from 1 August 2024, backdated to 1 July 2024, plus an full increment where available. The balance sheet remained strong with a cash balance of £14.629m and cash days of 145. ESFA financial health remained 'Good'. Governors asked a number of questions for clarification to which management responded. The Vice Principal also reported that comparisons with local colleges indicated that Myerscough needs to become more efficient in delivering the curriculum.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

07.24

Decision

Student Bursary Fund Allocations 2024/2025

The Committee considered the review of the HE Bursary Fund Policy, Procedure and Allocations for 2024/2025. The allocations and policy had been compiled in line with ESFA guidance. As part of the allocation from the ESFA for further education students, funds are allocated in order to enable students from low-income households (less than £35k) to access education. Students can request bus passes, meal cards, contributions towards accommodation, tuition fees and other education/living costs. Residential applications from non-specialist sports or public services students would continue to be declined. Residential bursaries for specialist sports students were limited to an initial allocation of 55 awards. Should there be an increase in successful applications this could increase but the overall ratio would remain the same. Travel awards, funded to all students, would be increased to 100%, subject to a maximum allocation. Increased award values to be approved. The current FE policies to be re-approved for 2024/2025. Only minor amendments had been made to the Policy and Procedure from the previous year.

Resolved:

- 1. That the Bursary Fund Policy and Procedure be agreed as remaining fit for purpose.**
- 2. That the proposals and allocations for 2024/2025 be noted.**

08.24

ESFA Funding Audit 2023/2024

Decision

The Committee considered a letter from the Department for Education informing the College that Myerscough had been chosen by ESFA for a funding audit of the 2023/2024 accounts. The audit will be undertaken by Wylie Bisset on behalf of the ESFA.

Resolved: That the letter be noted.

09.24

Strategic Risk Register

Decision

The Committee considered the Strategic Risk Report for 2023/2024 as presented by the Vice Principal. Included in the report were references to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map. The report identified the top five risks for the College.

Resolved: That the report be received.

10.24

Human Resources for the Period Ended 30 April 2024

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 30 April 2024.

The Committee noted staff turnover – the percentage of workers who leave – was 19.04% for all staff, 21.43% for management staff, 23.29% for teaching staff and 16.20% for support staff. As a comparison during the same period last year, staff turnover was 18.55% for all staff, 17.5% for management staff, 18.46% for teaching staff and 20% for support staff. Current staff turnover was slightly above the national average for colleges which stood at 17.8%. For the quarter to April 2024 the College supported 132 vacancies, unchanged from the same period last year. The College failed to fill 43 of the vacancies at the first attempt. Compared to the previous quarter there had been a reduction of 36 vacancies in part due a freeze on new posts pending the outcome of the curriculum planning review. 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 2.54 and the lost time percentage was 0.98%. For the same period last year, the average number of working days lost due to sickness at the College was 1.88 and the lost time percentage was 0.72%. There were 9 staff absent, long term, at the end of the reporting period compared with 8 at the last reporting period. Sickness absence remained reasonably static in all categories at this time and was within the average for the sector. There were a total of 58 new employee relations cases during this period an increase of 14 from the previous quarter. A total of 24 cases were still on-going. The report also included details of training being undertaken together with the introduction of wellbeing support for staff. An appendix to the report detailed the agreed pay proposals.

Resolved: That the report be received.

11.24

Decision

Health and Safety Report for the Period Ended 30 April 2024

Members gave consideration to the Health and Safety Report for the period ended 30 April 2024, 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 96 to 125 when compared with the same period last year and near misses had increased from 18 to 27. There were 2 RIDDOR reportable accidents during the period making a total of 4 for the year and, at 1.08%, was below the target of less than 2.6%. Analysis indicated that the 125 accidents involved 18 staff, 101 students and 6 visitors: 22 (17%) were taken to hospital - 17 Students, 2 Apprentices, 2 Staff and 1 Visitor 76 (61%) received first aid treatment 27 (22%) needed no treatment 82% of accident were treated on site. There were no areas of significant concern. The report included details of recent audits, training and drills.

Resolved: That the report be received.

