

Meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee

Date:	18 March 2024	Room number	Boardroom
Present	Carole Ditty (Chair), Natalie Davison (Principal & CEO), Molly Makota (MM), Andy Forbes (AF)		
Via Teams:	Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe (EK)		
In attendance	Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) (CGO) Wijay Pitumpe (Interim Deputy Principal - Finance & Resources) (IDPFR)		
Apologies	Talha Ahmad, Forhad Altafi, Michelle Allen (Executive Director – HR & Safeguarding)		
Circulation	Policy & Resources Committee/Corporation		

1.	Welcome and apologies. The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Talha Ahmad, Forhad Altafi and Michelle Allen.				
2.	Declarations of Interest Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the Agenda if appropriate. It was noted that EK was not directly involved in discussions concerning the Broadway Theatre and, as positions were aligned, there was no conflict of interest, however, this would be reviewed going forward.				
3.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 29 January 2024 The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 January 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record. Approved: The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 January 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.				
4.	Matters arising An update on the actions from the previous meeting was provided:				
	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
	C/f	Pre-covid data and nature of incident data to be provided going forward.	Head of H&S	March 2024	Agreed for March Meeting
	6.	Clarity on the Committee's role to recommend approval re ONS requirements to the Corporation to be included in the Financial Regulations.	CGO	ASAP	Complete
	8.	Risk rating for the people element of the risk register to be increased.	IDPFR	ASAP	Complete

		Broadway Theatre and Apprenticeships to be highlighted as individual risks. Health & Safety to be added to the Committee risks going forward.			
5.	<p>EDI – Single Equality Scheme Action Plan</p> <p>The Principal/CEO advised that EDI would be discussed by this Committee going forward and provided an update on proposed actions to move EDI forward including policy, single equality scheme, objectives, action plan and external input.</p> <p>The Chair stated that she had previously attended internal College EDI meetings which had included an active group of staff and the College had also previously engaged with inclusive employers. The Principal/CEO confirmed that the Committee would continue.</p> <p>Discussion took place on current EDI experience within the Committee and potential links with EDI policies within LBBD. AF noted that the Black Leadership Group would be keen to be involved and external links should be considered.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current position be noted and further updates be provided at each Committee.</p>				
6.	<p>Disaster Recovery Policy</p> <p>The Interim Deputy Principal Finance & Resources (IDPFR) presented the Disaster Recovery Plan, reporting that there were two versions of the Policy- public and private (private had personal contact details of all the team) and each activity had a lead person and a deputy. Mock exercises were undertaken across the College annually.</p> <p>In response to a query from the Chair, the Committee were informed that Insurers were notified as a matter of course and legal advice was sought as and when required. The Chair advised of the benefit of legal privilege for issues/concern relating to Health and Safety and reports/records being subject to disclosure. The IDPR advised that a comment relating to this would be included.</p> <p>The IDPR confirmed that the insurance cover was for the whole College group but there was also a separate policy for the Theatre. In response to a query from AF concerning outward facing public relations, the IDPFR advised that communication was channelled through the Principal/CEO and Director of Marketing. Training had taken place for the SLT on how to handle media and this was being repeated.</p> <p>MM stated that it would be useful to include a communication chart to summarise who to contact for a specific incident. It was agreed that a summary flowchart would be included.</p> <p>Action: Reference to legal advice/legal privilege to be included in the Policy. Summary flowchart of specific contacts to be added to the Policy.</p> <p>Approved: subject to the above actions, the Disaster Recovery Policy was approved for future use. This would be ratified by the Board of Corporation.</p>				
7.	<p>KPI Dashboard – Progress against strategic priorities</p> <p>The Principal/CEO reported that the dashboard had been updated from points received at the November Strategy Event including an additional column for materiality threshold.</p>				

	<p>The Committee were informed that the KPI's for EDI were points 3.6 achievement gaps and 4.4 and 4.5 – EDI indicators around staff. Domain 1, domain 4 (other than 4.1) and domain 5 were specific to the Policy & Resources Committee. It was noted that the strategic priorities would need to connect to the strategic plan.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the format was easy to navigate and ensuring each domain matched to the strategic plan was more important than changing the order to relate to each committee. The RAG rating, trend and performance updates were useful.</p> <p>The Chair questioned whether the HR data was not yet available. The Principal/CEO replied that data had improved but due to capacity issues some of the data could not yet be relied upon. It was noted that an electronic version would be created in the future.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current update be noted.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Update on the progress of curriculum business planning 2023-24</p> <p>The Principal/CEO reported that business planning was progressing well noting that the process and the briefing of managers had been impressive. Management had been requested to complete their business plans for meetings scheduled the first week after the Easter break.</p> <p>Focus was needed on progression routes (entry level, level 1 foundation etc) as these were currently missing resulting in high volumes of withdrawals and contribution rates (curriculum plan, cost staffing plan) to provide an understanding of the planned contribution of each curriculum area. Ensuring plans that met income targets with sufficient focus on the costs for delivery was key.</p> <p>AF stated that it was pleasing to hear the process was robust and asked for clarity on the process for capital bids at the College. The IDPFR replied that each budget holder could bid for capital which was scrutinised before being agreed if appropriate. During the last two years the College had embarked on a replacement IT programme including improvements to wi-fi and replacement to network switches. The current focus was to level up facilities at Rush Green eg Hairdressing and improve facilities at the TSA. A capital development paper would be presented at the March Corporation meeting.</p> <p>In response to a query from AF, the Principal/CEO confirmed that the College were planning for the minimum teaching hours for English and Maths required by the Department for Education (DfE).</p> <p>AF asked whether there were any current assumptions for the 2024/25 pay award. The Principal/CEO replied that this had briefly been discussed as the AoC pay survey had been released. The current calculation was 1% was affordable based on additional funding on 16-19 but this would be discussed further at the Board meeting.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Management accounts as at January 2024 including Financial Performance year to date</p> <p>The IDPFR highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full year forecast was a deficit. • Cautious view – main income shortfall was AEB – working towards meeting the full target (97% would result in no clawback) • February management accounts to be presented at the March Board meeting. • Actions being taken to control expenditure – reduce agency/underutilisation/only business critical expenditure to year end • Additional pension allocation received from DfE • Cash – local authority late approving student numbers this year – cash increasing now numbers agreed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group accounts forecasting a deficit – work taking place to reduce expenditure re Broadway Theatre to redeploy three staff • RAAC – meeting weekly with the DfE- submitted costs to rectify the issue but anticipating three weeks for a decision –work would take six weeks to complete • DfE agreed to pay for additional expenditure re educational disruption <p>In response to a query from AF concerning T-levels, the IDPFR reported that a bid submitted last financial year had been ambitious but the allocation received was higher. The budget had been cautious but resulted in a final clawback which was incorporated into the figures. The College currently had 184 learners for T-levels which was now in line with the allocation.</p> <p>The Chair noted the change in position from the accounts reported in December but acknowledged the positive movement. AF added that resolving the agency issue was key in terms of Finance and Quality.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current position be noted.</p>
10.	<p>Compliance against Financial Regulations 2023/24</p> <p>The IDPFR advised that the Committee had previously requested compliance against financial regulations to be a standing agenda item and compliance had much improved. In relation to the HR numbers, the majority of this was in relation to agency staff as to simplify the system agency requests were included on a spreadsheet in HR and when budget holders had requested agency staff, the spreadsheet had not been completed on time. Training was taking place to ensure this did not remain an ongoing issue. It was noted that the financial risk was minimal, but this was non-compliance against the financial regulations.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the IDPFR for his efforts to ensure the situation was resolved.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current update be noted.</p>
11.	<p>HR Update including Zellis contract</p> <p>The Chair noted that this agenda item would be deferred to the March Board meeting.</p> <p>Agreed: that the position be noted.</p>
12.	<p>Subsidiaries Update including Broadway/RAAC position</p> <p>The IDPFR advised that the College had three subsidiaries – Apprenticeship Works and Aspire which were dormant and BDC@Broadway Limited which was active.</p> <p>Future discussions would be needed to consider all three Subsidiaries as, at present, the College was subsidising Broadway with loans which needed to be considered in terms of future liabilities.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current position be noted.</p>
13.	<p>Subcontracting Report</p> <p>The IDPFR reported that the subcontracting plan was on track – the College had a subcontracted provision of £1.2m between two subcontractors, however, the College strategy was to reduce subcontracting as appropriate.</p> <p>AF queried the rationale for the subcontracted partners. The Principal/CEO replied that this was a strategic decision based on specific target sectors. The IDPFR added that there were some learners the College could not reach and the partners were their preferred option. AF added that in some cases other subcontracted propositions could be interesting and useful.</p>

	<p>The Chair noted that Ofsted had made specific comments around subcontracting which had now been reduced. It was noted that the metrics and audit were encouraging.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
14.	<p>Health & Safety Update</p> <p>The Principal/CEO reported that she had chaired the last Health & Safety Committee and noted that the representation was mostly the senior team and not a cross section of staff which would be addressed.</p> <p>The Committee were referred to apprenticeship placements and discussion took place on the correct process for undertaking risk assessments which, for capacity reasons, had not been taking place prior to the apprentice commencing the placement. To address this, some of the business development team were being trained on health and safety to be able to undertake some of the risk assessment work. Capacity to ensure sufficient full time students were put into work placements was also being explored.</p> <p>In response to a query from MM, the Principal/CEO confirmed that there was capacity in the apprenticeship team in terms of safeguarding which was part of the review and regular visits. The Chair stated that progress reports for this area were needed and this should remain part of the Health and Safety report.</p> <p>The Chair stated that training statistics were disappointing in some areas and an increased profile may need to be considered. Reference was made to the urgent requirements to service machinery which had been mentioned in previous reports. The IDPFR agreed to report back on this.</p> <p>The Chair recorded her thanks to the Head of Health & Safety for a comprehensive report.</p> <p>Action: Progress on apprenticeship placements to continue to be included in future reports. IDPFR to provide an update on the urgent requirements to service machinery.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
15.	<p>Infrastructure & Sustainability Update</p> <p>The IDPFR reported that the College had submitted a bid for a decarbonisation programme/grant which had been successful and would reduce long term energy bills. The College would need to contribute 12% (180K) over 2024/25 and 2025/26.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the IDPFR for the report and recorded her congratulations and thanks to the Assistant Director – Sustainability & Facilities on behalf of the Committee for securing the bid.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
16.	<p>Insurance Update including Governor Liability</p> <p>The IDPFR reported that Zurich had been the market leader for insurance for several years but a company called FE Protect had been engaged who had a consortium of underwriters offering good rates. The College had tendered last year to reduce premiums and increase coverage including cyber protection.</p> <p>Discussion took place on insurance for Governance confirming that Governors did not hold personal liability, provided that they operated within all applicable regulations and guidance. It was noted that the report had been issued to the full Board for their reference.</p>

	<p>The Chair thanked the IDPFR for the report, noting it was reassuring and important to have this knowledge.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
17.	<p>ONS Re-classification</p> <p>The Chief Governance Officer (CGO) reported that this was a standing agenda item and there were no current updates to report to the Committee. Compliance would continue to be monitored.</p> <p>Agreed: that the position be noted.</p>
18.	<p>Committee Risks</p> <p>The IDPFR reported that a simplified register which had been a recommendation from the advisory internal audit would be taken forward with the new DPFR. The Board Assurance Framework would remain as agreed.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the risk pertaining to people and asked whether enhancements to the benefits package had been put in place. The Principal/CEO confirmed that further work on this had not yet been undertaken.</p> <p>AF queried whether the wording for the risk relating to change in funding body policy needed to be amended as the College could not change the policy only how it was reacted to. It was agreed this would be reviewed by the incoming DPFR.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the simplified register template could be shared with the Committee. This was agreed.</p> <p>MM stated that it was pleasing to see that the Health & Safety risk was rated as green but given conversations around this area it still sounded high risk. The IDPFR advised that this would be reviewed by SLT.</p> <p>Agreed: that the position be noted. Action: risk register template to be shared with the committee.</p>
19.	<p>AoB –Meeting Evaluation/Priorities for Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More focus on forward looking – business development/horizon scanning/growth from a financial point of view/develop income <p>The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, recorded huge thanks to the IDPFR for all of his support and hard work over the previous 12 months and wished him well for the future.</p>
20.	<p>Date and time of next meeting – Monday 17 June 2024, 5pm</p>

The Chair thanked all those in attendance for their contributions and to the officers for their reports. The meeting closed at 18.35pm.

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
6.	Reference to legal advice/legal privilege to be included in the Policy.	IDPFR	ASAP	Complete

6.	Summary flowchart of specific contacts to be added to the Disaster Recovery Policy.	IDPFR	ASAP	Complete
14.	Progress on apprenticeship placements to continue to be included in future reports.	IDPFR	ASAP	
14.	IDPFR to provide an update on the urgent requirements to service machinery.	IDPFR	ASAP	
18.	Risk register template to be shared with the committee.	IDPFR	ASAP	Complete

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date.....