

Meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee

Date:	14 June 2021	Room number	Via Microsoft Teams
Present	Evelyn Carpenter (Chair), Carole Ditty (CD), Forhad Altafi (FA), Yvonne Kelly (Principal/CEO)		
In attendance	Wijay Pitumpe (Chief Finance & Enterprise Officer) (CFEO); Veronica Anthony-David (Chief Transformation Officer) (CTO), Maxine Deslandes (Director of Finance & Estates) (DOFE), Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) (CGO) Claire Wilsher (Head of Marketing) (CW) – Until Agenda Item 7 Steve Brown – (H&S Manager) (SB)		
Apologies	Stuart Fraser (Vice-Chair)		
Circulation	Policy & Resources Committee		

1.	<p>Welcome and apologies. Apologies for absence were received from the Vice-Chair, Stuart Fraser. It was noted that Forhad Altafi would need to leave the meeting at 5pm.</p> <p>The Chair advised that this would be the last meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee for the CFEO as his last day at the College was at the end of July. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair recorded her warmest thanks to the CFEO for everything he had done for the College and wished him well for the future.</p>																												
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the Agenda if appropriate. None were anticipated.</p>																												
3.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Monday 8 March 2021 The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 8 March 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Approved: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 8 March 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>																												
4.	<p>Matters arising</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Agenda Item</th> <th>Action</th> <th>Responsibility</th> <th>By (deadline)</th> <th>Update</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8.</td> <td>Principal/CEO to discuss with CTO publishing testing data on the College website.</td> <td>Principal/CEO</td> <td>ASAP</td> <td>Complete</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8.</td> <td>The Principal/CEO to liaise with LBBD for the College data to join the school data in being reported to the Director of Public Health</td> <td>Principal/CEO</td> <td>ASAP</td> <td>Complete</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.</td> <td>Infrastructure & Estates Strategy Group Terms of Reference to be reviewed and brought back to the Committee for consideration.</td> <td>CFEO</td> <td>June 2021</td> <td>Deferred to new academic year</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13.</td> <td>Accident near misses to be included in future Health & Safety reports.</td> <td>DOFE/SB</td> <td>June 2021</td> <td>Complete</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	By (deadline)	Update	8.	Principal/CEO to discuss with CTO publishing testing data on the College website.	Principal/CEO	ASAP	Complete	8.	The Principal/CEO to liaise with LBBD for the College data to join the school data in being reported to the Director of Public Health	Principal/CEO	ASAP	Complete	10.	Infrastructure & Estates Strategy Group Terms of Reference to be reviewed and brought back to the Committee for consideration.	CFEO	June 2021	Deferred to new academic year	13.	Accident near misses to be included in future Health & Safety reports.	DOFE/SB	June 2021	Complete
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	<p>Although the Vice-Chair was unable to attend the meeting he had provided feedback and queries in advance of the meeting for the Chair to consider on his behalf. In response to a query from the Vice-Chair regarding why the new Infrastructure & Estates Strategy Group Terms of Reference had been deferred, the CGO advised that the focus of the Infrastructure & Estates Strategy Group was being revised to ensure the green agenda and climate change were also included. The revised Terms of Reference would be presented at the first meeting of the academic year. This was agreed.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Policy Review – Follow up from February Meeting</p> <p>SB reported that the amendments previously agreed by the Committee had been made to the relevant policies. A new Food Hygiene policy had been written and the previous Bomb Threats policy had been amended to Threats to College. The policies would be reviewed by the Health & Safety Committee the following week.</p> <p>The Chair thanked SB for a thorough position.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
	<p><i>It was agreed that Agenda Item 12 would be discussed at this point in the meeting to allow SB to withdraw after discussions on this item had taken place. Please see agenda Item 12.</i></p> <p><i>SB withdrew from the meeting prior to agenda item 6.</i></p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Marketing Update</p> <p>CW provided a review of all activities undertaken to date in order to maximise the number of people and the right people within the summer campaign, this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise data • Flood channels with USPs • Re-focus on sales funnel • BDC message – Be empowered • Digital first campaign • Visuals • Be the one to help the learners achieve • Application and progression numbers • Application trends • Measuring success • Digital campaign statistics • Organic social initial impact • T-level applications versus target <p>CD queried the intention around ensuring marketing is received by those that may be digitally deprived. CW replied that the College was aware that there were some learners without access to digital equipment etc and a lot of out of home marketing was taking place on buses, billboards, targeted leaflet drops etc to ensure a multi-channel approach.</p> <p>FA asked how the College marketed to learners who may change course. CW responded that progression events took place with all curriculum areas, parent newsletters were issued to all parents and learners were emailed about careers support and options. Work was taking place to provide emails to showcase the student support available as early identification of potential issues should help with retention.</p> <p>The Chair questioned if there was anything more the College needed to do to improve school liaison. CW advised that good progress had been made in the last few months and it was hoped that explorer days would be rolled out to students if restrictions permitted. At present only small groups could visit the campus. The Chair encouraged the College to explore more small groups coming into College instead of full years to ensure schools continued to be on board.</p>

The Chair thanked CW for a great presentation. The Principal/CEO added her thanks to CW and the CTO advising that the CTO had been leading Marketing and this has proved to be very productive.

Agreed: That the current position be noted.

CW left the meeting.

7. **Financial Regulations Annual Review**

The DOFE presented the annual review of the Financial Regulations advising that there had been only one change to the previous version: post descriptions had been amended and Curriculum Directors were now referred to as 'Heads of.' The Chair suggested that a schedule advising where the changes had been made would be useful. It was agreed that this would be updated for the Corporation.

The Chair questioned how the College ensured compliance with the financial regulations and the measures in place to monitor this. The DOFE advised that training was provided for staff when the budget packs were issued and the financial regulations were sent via link with staff asked to sign to confirm they had read these. Business partnering meetings took place throughout the year to monitor compliance and raise any compliance issues.

In response to a query from the Principal/CEO it was agreed that notifications would be issued to staff who did not follow due process with regard to the financial regulations. The Chair stated that the Committee should have sight on breaches, action taken and changes to process as a result. The DOFE stated that the largest area of risk was the booking of agency staff and this was routinely raised at SLT for discussion.

It was agreed that a report on risks and non-compliance with the Financial Regulations would be provided at future meetings. Notifications to be issued to staff going forward when due process has not been followed.

Action: Schedule of changes to be provided in the Financial Regulations.

A report on risks and non-compliance with the Financial Regulations would be provided at future meetings. Notifications to be issued to staff going forward when due process has not been followed.

Approved: Subject to the inclusion of the schedule of changes, the Financial Regulations were recommended to the Corporation for approval.

8. **Management Accounts – to end April 2021**

The CFEO informed the Committee of the current key points:

- Target year end position was £998K – income had decreased.
 - Two key risks: AEB and apprenticeships.
 - £312K additional funding taken over to next year.
 - £200K shortfall for AEB delivery target.
 - Lobbying GLA re tolerance levels - last year was 68% - College asked to provide a business case
 - Further update to the Board the following week
-
- The Chair stated that she had several questions for the CFEO to answer in the first instance:
 - What was the actual position as at the point of the meeting and had the position changed in the last month? On behalf of the Vice-Chair, in March a deficit of £1.18m was presented and the forecast was now £998K – Is this the worst case scenario and what was the likely outcome?
 - The list of mitigating actions were not costed and therefore where was the evidence that these would offset the £998K and how could the Committee be assured that these actions were deliverable and would reduce the deficit as these actions have been seen before?
 - Are the high value premium courses within the 16-18 funding table new funding and is the increase realistic?

- Staff income ratio is 70.3% compared to FE benchmark of 68% - why hasn't this changed and what is in place to address this?

The CFEO advised that the £998K was the deficit forecast for 31 July 2021. This figure could not be mitigated and the College was trying to ensure this did not increase. The worst case would be a further AEB shortfall resulting in a deficit of £1.2million. If the College succeeded with the GLA business case the position would be improved and the forecast position would be £698K.

The Chair stated that the Corporation had agreed a break even budget not a deficit budget. The Principal/CEO responded that the College would not achieve a break-even budget due to the shortfall in apprenticeships and AEB. The College must mitigate anything further than the £998K whilst pursuing the business case for the GLA but there was potentially a further £600K deficit. An update would be issued to the Board explaining the actual position with the final outturn for the year end the following week. The business case was focussed on three areas: agency recruitment – on stop after the end of term; non pay – still a significant budget and work taken place to consider what could be rolled forward or held and the close of all the projects with their contributions (including consultants). The College's priority was to protect the financial health.

In response to a query from the Chair, the CFEO confirmed that the capital money was very specific and therefore could not be mixed with the revenue money. The capital money was rigorously monitored by the DfE and must be spent in this academic year. The Principal/CEO added that the key issue was why very little capital had currently been spent. Some of the projects needed to work forward due to remote learning but only spending a small proportion would impact on learners and learning.

The CFEO informed the Committee that the Government had provided more money for high value premium courses and there would be no clawback so this would be secured.

FA asked what actions were underway to reduce classroom cover and classroom efficiencies. The CFEO responded that the College was 'challenging the need' and decrease in class sizes resulted in classes being merged. The Principal/CEO stated that part of the issue going forward was to be able to see the staffing budget particularly in relation to the agency budget to provide more understanding and assurance on the direction of travel and contribution rates.

The CFEO confirmed that £998K was the bottom line aside from the potential position with the GLA. The College was exploring non-pay savings but there were no further savings in the pay budget. The DOFE stated, however, that vacant posts were not being recruited to and there was therefore some scope for savings. Work was still taking place to reduce the amount of agency staff by 25 June which would generate further savings. The Principal/CEO advised that the accounts needed to be reworded to reflect that a break even position could not be achieved.

The CFEO clarified that as at 31 April staffing costs against income was 70% but the forecast position as at 31 July would be 65%.

CD asked what was the cut-off point for the budget and when the final figures would be reported to the Corporation. The CFEO advised that an update would be issued to the Board next week and a full report presented at the July Corporation meeting.

Agreed: That the current position be noted.

Action: Further financial update to be issued to the Corporation the following week.

FA left the meeting.

<p>9.</p>	<p>Update on FE Issues and Benchmarking</p> <p>The CFEO provided an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FE White paper – reforms – highlighted new intervention powers; potential switch to outcome based funding; multi-year funding • ESFA financial reporting – College Financial Forecasting Return to be submitted by 31 July; financial health changes; new FE Commissioner • Capital funding – FECA; Capital Transformation Fund; GLA • Benchmarking – London GFEs; Performance Ratio (EBITDA); Staff costs as % of income <p>The Chair thanked the CFEO for a helpful update.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Capital Development Update</p> <p>The CFEO highlighted the following capital development projects: F Block would be completed by end of August 2021. E-block project at design stage, actual refurbishment scheduled to commence end of August for occupation in May 2022. Application submitted to FE capital transformation fund to upgrade motor vehicle facilities – application process delayed by ESFA.</p> <p>CD stated that it was impressive to see how the projects had been managed and led and questioned when it would be appropriate to reset the strategic plan to help the College to be more strategic and proactive around the funding streams. The CFEO replied that the College needed to reset the estates and infrastructure strategy and this would be considered in the new academic year. CD recorded her thanks to the CFEO and the relevant teams.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Partnerships Progress Report</p> <p>The Principal/CEO presented the partnerships progress report and advised that over the last four years the College had reduced subcontracted provision but this has not assisted with the overall AEB position and costs for this year.</p> <p>Agreed: The partnerships progress report was received.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Health & Safety Termly Report</p> <p>SB provided an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H&S Committee • Coronavirus measures in place – DfE and HSE happy with the position • H&S inspections • Health and wellbeing • One notable incident from the accidents report – slip/fall and signage was in place • Near misses now included in accident report • Training <p>CD advised that her employer was piloting two carbon tracker apps for staff to be able to monitor their own carbon footprint and she would be able to share these once the pilot had ended. CD was thanked for her offer and the College was keen to see the apps once finalised.</p> <p>In response to queries from the Committee, SB advised sustainability was being advertised through word on the street and staff emails to ensure buy in from both staff and learners. Recycling bins had also been placed across the campus.</p>

	<p>SB reported that incidents of violence and aggression were not always specifically against learners and there had been an instance where a tutor had been affected. SB advised that support had been provided through the Estates department and staff had been made aware that incidents needed to be reported to ensure issues were highlighted.</p> <p>The DOFE advised that this was the last meeting for SB as he was moving on from the College. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair recorded her thanks to SB for his work and wishes him good luck for the future.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
13.	<p>Gender Pay Update</p> <p>The Committee discussed the Gender Pay Update and the Chair stated that the strategies in place were very impressive and innovative. CD added that this was a great report.</p> <p>The CTO advised that the College was pushing forward with the Women's Network based on the positive feedback from staff. In addition, the College would be providing the London Living Wage from next year.</p> <p>Agreed: That the report be received and the position noted.</p>
14.	<p>EDI Update</p> <p>CD stated that she commended the approach of bite size training as it was more effective for ensuring awareness was raised.</p> <p>The Chair noted the clear EDI statement of intent alongside targets and asked how the targets would change from this year. The CTO replied that the focus would be affected groups and the data to inform decisions going forward eg issues picked up through catch up programmes, areas with higher number of complaints and stretch targets.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there was any mandatory training for staff. The CTO responded that the College was launching a leadership development programme to include inclusive leadership. The intention was to introduce something different at each staff learning event.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the CTO for a great report.</p> <p>Agreed: That the EDI update be noted.</p>
15.	<p>Freedom of Information Policy</p> <p>The CGO advised that the Freedom of Information Policy was based on the ICO guidance and tailored to the College's requirements. The addition to the reasons for refusal was highlighted but the CGO confirmed that the College would only refuse requests in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Approved: The Freedom of Information Policy was approved for future use.</p>
16.	<p>Governor Expenses Policy</p> <p>The CGO reported that the Governor Expenses Policy remained unchanged and would be reviewed every two years to ensure it remained current.</p> <p>Approved: The Governor Expenses Policy was approved by the Committee for future use.</p>
17.	<p>JISC – Digital Governance Review</p> <p>The CGO advised the Committee that the digital governance review was part of the College's cyber security review being facilitated through JISC. The Committee were asked to provide any feedback to the CGO via email.</p>

	Agreed: The Committee to consider any comments or feedback on the digital governance review and forward to the CGO.
18	Date and time of next meeting – To be confirmed

The Chair thanked all those in attendance for their contributions. The meeting closed at 17.49pm.

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
7.	Schedule of changes to be provided in the Financial Regulations.	DOFE	6 July	Complete
7.	A report on risks and non-compliance with the Financial Regulations would be provided at future meetings.	DOFE	Next meeting	December 2021 Meeting
7.	Notifications to be issued to staff going forward when due process has not been followed.	DOFE	As required	In place
8.	Further financial update to be issued to the Corporation.	CFEO	w/c 21 June 2021	Complete

Signed.....
Evelyn Carpenter (Chair)

Date.....