

Preston College

Redacted and Abridged ¹ Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2021 at 5.30pm Preston College

Present:

Mr S Edwards	Chair
Mrs L Doswell	Principal and Chief Executive
Mr S Browne	
Ms J Jones	

In attendance:

Mrs C Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Mr S Nixon	Executive Director of Resources
Ms G Thornton	Head of Human Resources

Apologies:

Mr J Boydell

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Clerk welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Resources Committee on campus since the pandemic started. The Clerk reported that Mr Anyon had resigned from the Board due to work commitments. The Clerk reported that apologies had been received from Mr Boydell.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Appointment of Chairperson

The Committee appointed Mr Edwards as Chairperson.

Mr Edwards assumed the Chair.

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. The Chair asked the Clerk to add appointment of a Vice Chair to the agenda of the next meeting.

Resolved: The Committee appointed Mr Edwards as Chairperson.

Action: The Clerk to add appointment of a Vice Chair to the agenda of the next meeting.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Committee agreed the Minutes of the Resources meeting on 17th June 2021 as a correct record.

¹ Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes.

Resolved: the minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2021 were approved.

5. Matters arising

The Committee noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report on progress of actions from the previous meeting.

6. Draft Outturn Position 2020/21

Mr Nixon, Executive Director of Resources, presented his report on the Draft Outturn Position 2020/21.

The Committee commended management and colleagues for the management of the College finances during 2020/21, particularly as the challenges had been greater than 2019/20.

Members requested further information on how the savings had been achieved and asked for assurance that all necessary maintenance work had been completed and necessary work had not been deferred to future years. Mr Nixon provided assurance.

Mr Nixon responded to the return rate of College IT equipment loaned to learners during the pandemic to date.

Resolved: The Committee noted the forecast outturn position.

7. Capital Budget Outturn 2020/21

Mr Nixon, Executive Director of Resources, presented his report on the Capital Budget Outturn 2020/2021.

The Committee discussed and noted the Capital Budget Outturn 2020/21.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Capital Budget Outturn 2020/21

8. Performance Against Key Performance Indicators

Mr Nixon presented his report on Performance Against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) –and referred members to the KPI report at Appendix A.

In response to a query Ms Thornton undertook to provide information on staff vacancies and how long the vacancies were open for. Mr Nixon explained that as staff were required to give one month notice there was a gap during the appointment process for new starters.

Members discussed with management:

- the importance of ensuring that existing staff did not experience additional pressure when there were longer term vacancies;
- efforts to attract, engage and retain staff;
- some vacancies were more difficult to fill than others due to market pressures, particularly in areas such as construction.

Members were assured that additional resources had been approved in response to the increase in learners and pay scales remained under review, particularly in harder to recruit fields. Members commented that despite a very difficult external conditions the KPIs were encouraging which was testament to the work of management and staff.

The Committee noted the KPI report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the current performance against Key Performance Indicators.
Action: Ms Thornton to provide information on staff vacancies and how long the vacancies were open for.

9. Enrolment Update

Mr Nixon presented his Enrolment Update report. He reported:

- a positive start to enrolment for 2021/22 with a busy campus;
- learner recruitment numbers to date;
- learner attendance is lower than previous years, particularly in some schools, and interventions had been put in place, this would be monitored by Quality and Standards Committee.

In response to a query on whether the increase in 16-18 learner numbers could be attributable to increased 16-18 demographics or increased market share, Mr Nixon explained that if the enrolment numbers were retained it would indicate that market share had increased. He referred to ongoing activities to engage with potential learners and their parents from local feeder schools and referred to the recent advice nights. Mr Nixon undertook to provide further information on market share.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Enrolment Update

Action: Mr Nixon undertook to provide further information on market share for learner enrolment.

10. People Strategy 2020/21

Ms Thornton reported that the College had been nominated by Investors in People as one of the top 20 UK Employers at Gold level for 250+ had been selected to take part in the National Award for Top UK Employer in that category; and one of the apprentices employed by the College in the IT Department had been selected as a finalist for the Amazing Apprentice of the Year award by the North West Employers Engagement Group.

Ms Thornton presented her People Strategy 2020/21 report. Ms Thornton reported on progress against the 2020/21 action plan which was detailed in Appendix A and referred to changes made to Committee reporting following an internal audit of the People Strategy Implementation Framework in May 2021. She reported that:

- the Resources Committee would receive two additional mid year papers to facilitate the monitoring of activities and implementation of learning. It is proposed that these mid year reports would be presented to Committee in the February 2022 and May or June 2022 meetings;

- an additional column has been added to Appendix A to capture any lessons learned through the development and implementation of the projects and support the delivery of future Action Plans.

Ms Thornton reported that, as an example of lessons learned, the College's Remote Working Policy had been well received by staff and would be developed further. Members discussed with management the importance of ensuring that any further remote working flexibility was in the best interests of the College and did not impact learners and provided sufficient flexibility that staff could be asked to return to campus if required. It was discussed that increased remote working provided business, health and wellbeing and staff retention benefits, however it was not practical for all College roles. Members noted that discussions would take place with Executive Leadership Team and unions before any further changes to the existing Remote Working Policy were presented to the Committee for review.

For a second example, Ms Thornton referred to the launch of the HR dashboard on Dynistics for managers and proposed that the dashboard be adapted to create a Governor HR dashboard to provide data against key HR metrics such as sickness. It was noted that sickness had significantly decreased during lockdown.

It was noted that the HR Action Plan for 2021/22 had not been presented pending the Board's strategic planning meeting on 21st October 2021.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report and progress against the People Strategy Action Plan 2020/21 (Appendix A). The Committee agreed it should receive two mid year updates.

11. **Resources Committee Forward Work Programme**

The Clerk outlined the draft Resources Committee Forward Work Programme (FWP) 2021/22 which detailed the anticipated business of the Resources Committee in 2019/20. The Clerk highlighted:

- the FWP was not a static document and could be subject to change as new issues arose during the year;
- the FWP would be kept under review by the Chair of the Resources Committee, the Chief Executive and Principal, Executive Director of Resources and the Clerk and the Committee would be informed of any substantive changes.

During discussion with the Clerk and management the Committee noted that the November meeting would include a number of larger documents including the annual report and financial statements and the Regional Regulations. The Committee it would be helpful to provide the annual report and financial statements separately from the full pack.

The Committee approved the Resources Committee Forward Work Programme.

Resolved: The Committee reviewed and approved the Resources Committee Forward Work Programme 2021/22.

12. Committee Effectiveness Review

The Clerk reported that the Board had agreed at its meeting on 8th July 2021 to return to separate Board and Committee effectiveness reviews. The Clerk referred members to the draft Resources Committee Questionnaire at Appendix A and explained that the questionnaire from 2019 had been updated to reflect the changes in the Committee's remit following the formation of the Senior Post Holder Remuneration Committee. The Clerk explained that the collated responses would be compiled into a report for discussion at the next meeting.

The Committee discussed the questionnaire and queried whether it was the best way of evaluating the effectiveness of the Committee. Members discussed whether an external perspective would be helpful alongside the Committee's self evaluation. The Clerk explained that the collated questionnaire had been designed to provide a starting point for the Committee's review discussion and was a method of collating anonymous feedback to facilitate the Committee's discussions. The Committee discussed the necessity for the Committee members to find out more about the background, experience and skills of its members.

During discussion, the Clerk reported:

- on plans for an external facilitator to lead the Board evaluation session on 21st October 2021 to provide an external perspective;
- only the Resources Committee and the Clerk would attend the Committee effectiveness review;
- during the summer all governors had been asked to complete a new skill and experience audit and a separate report could be developed for the Resources Committee.

Members agreed that, alongside the Committee Effectiveness collated report, it would be helpful to use the Board skill and experience audit responses to provide a report on the skills and experience of the Resources Committee.

The Committee approved the draft Committee Effectiveness Review questionnaire and agreed that the collated report would be the starting point for the Committee's Effectiveness Review.

Resolved: The Board approved the draft Committee Effectiveness Review questionnaire.

Action: The Clerk to provide a report on the skills and experience of the Resources Committee.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on 25th November 2021.