

Finance & Assets Committee Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held on

Monday 11th November 2021

via Microsoft Teams

Present:	Andrew Unitt (Chair)	(AU))
	Andy Griffin	(AG)) External Governors
	Mike Green	(MG))
	Carole Thorogood	(CT))
In attendance:	Martin Sim	(MS)) Interim Principal/CEO
	Andy Comyn	(AC)) CFO/Deputy Principal
	Gary McGinty	(GM)) Director of Estates and Facilities
	Robert Griffiths	(RG)) Transformation Director
	Rachel Robson	(RR)) Director of Governance
	Rich Williams	(RW)) Director of MIS and IT
	Mike Firth	(MF)) ESFA

1	WELCOME & APOLOGIES 022 Apologies were received from John van de Laarschot and Andrew Simpson.
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST 023 No declarations of interest were received.
3	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 024 The Committee resolved that the non-confidential and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 21 st September 2021, (distributed as F&A.221121.002), be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.
4	ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING 4.1 Action Tracker 025 The Committee reviewed the Open Action Tracker (distributed as F&A.221121.003): 21.09.21 Action 1 Analysis requested contained in the management accounts. Action complete. 21.09.21 Action 2 Revised IT Strategy on agenda. Action complete. 4.2 Matters Arising 026 There were no matters arising.
5	MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND ENROLMENT UPDATE

	<p>027 AC took governors through the headlines of the period 2 management accounts (distributed as F&A.221121.005) to the committee. He noted that it remained too early to draw conclusions for the full year but that there was nothing to indicate any significant issues. He noted that income was slightly down but that this was off set by savings on both pay and non-pay costs. Capex is slightly behind profile, but AC confirmed that it was envisaged that the full amount budgeted would be spent. The positive EBITDA position was highlighted.</p> <p>028 Following discussion at the last meeting AC drew governors' attention to the addition of page 6 summarising the financial outlook for 21/22.</p> <p><i>MG arrived</i></p> <p>029 Governors received and reviewed the enrolment update (distributed as F&A.221121.006). A governor asked how this compared to other colleges and questioned the impact of the teacher assessed grades (TAGs) for GCSE results. AC highlighted the impact of TAGs with students receiving higher than anticipated grades and being retained by school sixth forms, he also highlighted the impact of the jobs market on those that would have otherwise opted to take level 1 and 2 courses. He confirmed that other FE colleges are reporting very similar experiences. It was noted that historically the college has recruited a number of students very late in the process, but this has not happened this year.</p> <p><i>The remainder of discussion on this item has been included in confidential minutes</i></p>
6	<p>RECONCILIATION JULY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND YEAR END ACCOUNTS</p> <p>030 The committee received and reviewed the Reconciliation Report between July Management Accounts and Year End Accounts (distributed as F&A.221121.007). AC noted that the purpose of the report is to reconcile the College's EBITDA from period 12 (July 2021) management accounts with the statutory accounts total comprehensive income for the period August 2020 to July 2021. The reconciliations shared show that the statutory accounts are based on the full year period 12 July 2021 management accounts and the EBITDA previously presented to the committee at the September meeting, and that the only changes included in the statutory accounts relate to the FRS 102 amendments required to meet accounting standards. A governor questioned the trend and direction of travel evidenced. AC confirmed that the college was delivering to the Recovery Plan and was therefore progressing in a positive direction.</p>
7	<p>ANNUAL ACCOUNTS</p> <p>031 The committee received the college accounts for review and recommendation to the Audit Committee (distributed as F&A.221121.008a), AC noted that the Statements would go to the Audit Committee together with the recommended accounts in accordance with the terms of reference of each committee. AC confirmed that the accounts had been prepared on a going concern basis and updated governors on the timescales for sign off. A governor asked if there had been any changes to the accounting policies in year, AC confirmed that there had not. A governor queried if there were any areas that were causing debate with the external auditors. AC noted the issues highlighted around the disposal of assets.</p> <p>The committee resolved to recommend the accounts to the audit committee.</p> <p>ESFA Finance Record</p>

	<p>032 AC confirmed that all colleges were required to complete the template and return to the ESFA with the Annual Statements and Accounts. It is completed using the college's data from the audited financial statements.</p> <p><i>The remainder of discussion on this item has been included in confidential minutes</i></p> <p>The committee resolved to recommend the ESFA Finance Record</p>
8	<p>RECOVERY PLAN</p> <p><i>This item has been included in the confidential minutes</i></p>
9	<p>ESFA FINANCIAL HEALTH</p> <p>033 Governors received and reviewed the ESFA confirmation of financial health for 21/22 and finance dashboard, following the submission of the college's financial forecasting return to the ESFA for 20/21 – 22/23 (distributed as F&A.221121.010).</p>
10	<p>IT STRATEGY</p> <p>034 RW presented the updated IT Strategy to the committee (distributed as F&A.221121.11). He confirmed that the Strategy had been updated to reflect comments received from committee members at the previous meeting. He advised that the Strategy covered the period 2021–2023, that it seeks to define the vision and direction of travel for the deployment and utilisation of the IT capabilities of the organisation as a whole and has been developed in close alignment with the College's Strategic Plan. RW drew governors' attention to the action plan, noting the distance to travel.</p> <p>035 A governor asked what blockers exist that potentially stand in the way of implementation of the strategy. RW noted that the available budget is challenging but that the IT team are seeking creative solutions and looking at potential availability of other sources of grant funding. He confirmed that recruitment to most posts had now been completed, noting that 2 to 3 vacancies were outstanding. RW advised that the college would shortly look to recruit an IT project manager to help move the plan forward. A governor asked if achieving all identified actions within the timeline was feasible. RW responded that delivery over the next 3 years was achievable but not very action may be delivered to the exact timeline specified, some may complete earlier and some later than suggested. He noted that the focus was on completion of key priority items early in the life of the plan. A governor questioned the completion of the security actions. RW confirmed that this was the first priority. Governors queried available back up plans, RW gave details. A governor noted that a couple of actions were behind schedule and asked for an update at Board.</p> <p>The committee resolved to recommend the approval of the IT Strategy to the Board.</p>
11	<p>ESTATES</p> <p><i>This item has been included in the confidential minutes</i></p>
12	<p>AOB</p> <p>036 There were no items of AOB.</p>
13	<p>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</p> <p>037 The date of the next scheduled meeting is Monday 31st January 2022 at 4.30pm. AU confirmed that, if possible, he would prefer to take that meeting on site, suggesting that one in three meetings moving forward be a face to face meeting with others on Teams.</p> <p>The Chair closed the meeting at 5.57pm</p>