



Minutes of the Resources, Integration and Change committee  
held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Present: Jim Webster (Chair)  
John Arnott, Simon Cove, John Dernie, Keeran Vetriko

With: Charlotte Mannion, Governor  
Stephen Horrobin, Deputy Principal Finance and Resources  
Tracy Scaife, Head of Governance

51. Apologies for absence – received from the Principal.

52. Disclosures of interest – none received.

53. Minutes of last meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and matters arising – agreed as a correct record. Matters arising raised as follows:

(a) 43. Treasury Policy report – with regard to removal of the actual monetary amounts being replaced with a percentage figure the Deputy Principal Finance and Resources advised that he felt it would be useful to retain the actual figures and would propose to include these alongside the percentage figures.

(b) 46(a) Any other business – BIMM contract – noted that confirmation has been received from BIMM that monies can be paid in the next academic year. A variation agreement has been signed by the college and is awaiting signature by BIMM.

54. Risk management update – report by Deputy Principal Finance and Resources received and noted.

It was further noted that two new risk areas have been added to the Risk Register – current 16-19 student recruitment and catering.

Recruitment for both September 2020 and September 2021 have been challenging due to the Covid-19 pandemic, competition and the negative perceptions of the merger of the two colleges. Next steps and mitigation measures were noted. The loss of numbers due to the Covid-19 pandemic is difficult to evidence and there could be a whole raft of other reasons for the shortfall. The shortfall of circa 200+ students enrolling will equate to a reduction in income of circa £900k. Statements from various sources had indicated previously that dips in the economy have a positive impact on education and it was questioned why this is not being seen by the college. Concerns were raised that the merger of the two colleges has had an impact on enrolment and the committee asked what actions are being implemented to address this. The committee asked for an item to be placed on the Corporation agenda and for the Head of Marketing to attend the meeting to provide more details to her report, particularly with regard to the comments regarding negative perceptions of the merger.

With regard to catering the Deputy Principal Finance and Resources advised that Sodexo, the outsourced catering contractors at Queens Drive have formally served notice to end their contract



with the college with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Discussions are taking place with Aramark, the outsourced caterers at North Star to take over the contract for Queens Drive.

***ACTION:*** *Agenda item re. shortfall in recruitment to be added to agenda for Corporation meeting to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021. AW be invited to the meeting to present report.*

55. Management accounts: P7 – report by Deputy Principal Finance and Resources received and noted.

It was further noted that the potential saving relating to exam fees has not yet been clarified. There is no one position across the various Boards with each of them setting their own policies with regard to refunds. They will still make a charge even if exams do not go ahead. Other possible savings were noted. The Deputy Principal Finance and Resources advised the meeting that he is hopeful that the forecast will be met. Cash flow at July 2021 was noted. The college should be broadly cash neutral next year (minus bank loan repayments and capex). The forecast assumes no gains or losses from creditors and debtors.

With regard to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) financial health rating it is thought that the college will be rated as ‘requires improvement’. A substantial improvement will be required to maintain the ‘good’ rating.

The committee asked if future commentary papers for the management accounts could include an overview position of income with and without partnerships or show partnerships income separately.

***ACTION:*** *future commentary reports to show partnerships income separately (SH).*

56. Value for money report – report by Head of Procurement and Deputy Principal Finance and Resources received and noted. The committee commended the excellent progress achieved with cost savings and supplier consolidation. These appear to be far better than was predicted in the original merger forecast.

The committee asked for an update to this paper to be presented to every meeting of the Resources, Integration and Change committee and for the report to include year on year savings.

***ACTION:*** *VFM report to be presented to each meeting with updates on savings included (TA/SH)*

57. FHP update – report by Flexible Learning Centre Manager received and noted.

The current position with regard to the implementation of the systems was noted. The systems need to be implemented sequentially across both campuses. Unfortunately staff at neither campus have prior experience which is likely to lead to slow progress.. Whilst it is believed that the risks associated with implementing the new systems are minimal, there is a concern about the pace of progress.

The committee asked for their concerns to be recorded with regard to the pace of implementation of the new systems and for mitigating actions to be considered.

58. Post-merger update – report by Principal received and noted.

The committee agreed that the report proposed a very comprehensive set of plans related to Employee Communications et al. They further agreed that they would like to see benchmarks against the best in the sector for each of the items and details of how these benchmarks can be



achieved, resourced and improved upon. A further comment was that the plans will need to include vision and values statements that will be agreed by the Corporation together with monitoring proposals .

The meeting asked the Principal to provide an update on how the teams within the college are placed to deliver the proposals and the reality of deliverability. Concerns were raised that the correct Human Resources (HR) structure needs to be in place.

The Principal was also asked to update the committee as further action plans are developed for other integration areas as part of the post-merger plan.

59. Any other business – raised as follows:

(a) Insolvency training for governors – the Head of Governance advised the meeting that a training session on insolvency would be arranged for all governors. A suitable trainer is currently being sought and the session will be arranged as soon as possible. It was suggested that the college's current auditors – Mazars and RSM – be approached to provide a trainer.

***ACTION:*** *TS/SH to arrange insolvency training session for all governors*

(b) Budget – confidential minutes refer.

60. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 4.00pm

61. Savings plan – confidential minutes refer.