

## Policy & Resources Committee

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### Approved Minutes

Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee held on Monday 1 February 2016 at the Southend Campus at 6.00 pm.

Present: Dr R Gray (Chairman)  
Ms O Buck  
Mr S Burrell  
Mr R Launder  
Ms A O'Donoghue CBE  
Mr D O'Halloran

In Attendance: Mr A McGarel (Deputy Principal & Chief Executive)  
Mr S Smith (Vice Principal, Corporate Resources) – item 5 only  
Ms L MacCormac (Head of Apprenticeships & Collaborative Partnerships) – item 6d only)  
Mrs R Brooks (Head of Human Resources (item 7 only)  
Ms D Brown (Vice Principal – Curriculum & Quality) till 6.30pm  
Mrs W Barnes (Vice Principal, Student Support)  
Mr R I Millea FCA (Clerk to the Corporation)

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms M West and Mr N Kelleway.

### 2. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

### 3. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16 November 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 16 November 2015 were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

### 4. Matters Arising

The Clerk reported that the full Board of the Corporation had approved the Annual Financial Statements for the College and its subsidiary companies and the Value for Money Policy at its Meeting on 7 December 2015.

### 5. Strategic Developments in South Essex (Paper PRC.16.01)

*This matter was deemed to be a confidential item under the Instrument & Articles and a separate minute has been prepared, which is attached to these Minutes.*

## 6. College Finances (Paper PRC.16.02)

### (a) Finance Report and (b) Forecast to 31 July 2016

*These matters were deemed to be confidential items under the Instrument & Articles and separate minutes have been prepared, which are attached to these Minutes.*

### (c) Learner Numbers and Financial Implications 2015-16

The Committee **RECEIVED** a Report written by Ms Rakshana Sadiq, recently appointed Interim Head of College Information Services, on progress against meeting the College's enrolment and funding targets. It was presented by the Deputy Principal & Chief Executive.

At this stage, the EFA learner numbers and funding is below target (94% of target equating to 376 learners). The College may well not meet the learner number target of 6565 learners but will strive to meet the funding target of £30,796,591 through other on-Campus recruitment. There will be a knock-on effect on the 2016/17 learner number allocation through the lagged funding model.

SFA 19+ funding is currently below target but it is anticipated to increase during the rest of this academic year as enrolments take place throughout the year, but success will depend on considerable further work to procure those enrolments. Failure to meet the allocation for 19+ for the year will result in a clawback of funding.

Similar comments apply to SFA 16-18 Apprenticeships.

The expectation is that the overall SFA target will be met.

It was noted that the College now has approval to offer Traineeships (pre-Apprenticeships) and this should boost our ability to meet our allocation this year.

**ACTION: DP&CE**

The Committee **NOTED** the Report.

### (d) Sub-Contracting and Collaborative Provision

*This matter was deemed to be a confidential item under the Instrument & Articles and a separate minute has been prepared, which is attached to these Minutes.*

## 7. HR Matters (Paper PRC.16.03)

The Committee **RECEIVED** a Report from the College's Head of Human Resources providing the Committee with information regarding staff absence and staff turnover, matching experience to date for this year to the KPIs set for both of these items for the 2015/16 academic year.

The **current rolling absence rate** is 10.32 days absence against the College KPI of 7 days per person during a twelve month rolling period. Present trends indicate that the KPI for the year will not be achieved. Reasons for sickness appear to have (often) a direct correlation with performance management.

It is a matter of considerable concern for the College.

In the light of this, the Head of HR has reviewed the process for managing absence and has implemented the following steps:

- Head of HR reviews absence with HR advisers
- Regular review meetings with Heads of Departments
- Uploading of sickness data onto the HR system
- Monthly Reports to Heads of Department

It is really not likely that the target of 7 days absence will be met and nine days absence per person is more achievable. It was noted that our sickness terms and conditions are generous. Nevertheless, the Committee did not wish to amend the KPI for this year but will review the final performance in the context of setting next year's KPI.

The Committee continued to note the detrimental effect of absence on the College's level of agency spend, which currently is well ahead of the year's budget (see item 6.(a) above).

As a consequence, **a management decision has been made to cease using Agency Workers from 26 February 2016 and make even greater efforts to effectively utilise the current workforce.** This is being tackled, firstly, through the Budget Review Meetings currently taking place.

Other options being pursued are internal bank staff arrangements and establishment of a College Recruitment Agency, alongside an Agency Tender process.

The **staff turnover** rate for September to December 2015 was 9% representing 97 leavers and it looks likely that, given the current trend, the KPI for the year of 15% or lower will be met.

A new addition to the Report was information on Recruitment as there is obviously a linkage to turnover experience. On average, it takes 20-25 days from the vacancy request to interview and Offer the job.

In response to challenge from Members, the Head of HR responded as follows:

- 40% of people leaving before a year has transpired said the 'role was not as expected' – variety of reasons give rise to this and they are closely reviewed
- No exit interviews are done but there is close review by managers and others as to why someone has left – there is a degree of subjectivity in this but every attempt is made to get genuine feedback from staff who are leaving
- Are we completing the recruiting process too quickly at 20-25 days? People offered jobs are given time to consider their response and it is not us putting on pressure on the individuals to make up their mind
- Have we done a comprehensive stress survey recently? No – will be considered in the near future

## 8. Area Reviews

*This matter was deemed to be a confidential item under the Instrument & Articles and a separate minute has been prepared, which is attached to these Minutes.*

## 9. Forthcoming Events (Paper PRC.16.04)

The Committee **NOTED** the schedule of forthcoming events provided by the Clerk.

## **10. Date of Next Meetings**

Monday 25 April 2016 at the Thurrock Campus at 6.00 pm.

Monday 20 June 2016 at the Southend Campus at 6.00 pm.

There being no further business, the Meeting terminated at 7.55 pm.

Signed.....Dated.....