**OLDHAM COLLEGE**

**RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 October 2024**

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| **Present:** | **Members:** | Sue Kershaw | Governor (Chair) |
| | | Jonathan Edwards | Governor |
| | | Alex Gardiner | Governor |
| | | Mashukul Hoque | Governor |
| | | Simon Jordan | Governor (Principal) |
| | | Adrian Barrass | Governor |
| | | Danielle Vipond | Staff Governor |
| | | Catalina Cenusa | Student Governor |
| | **Officers:** | Janet Frost | Clerk to the Corporation |
| | | Rebecca Johnson | Finance Director |
| | | Claire Symons | HR & OD Director |
| | | Stephen Hurst | Head of Estates & Facilities Management |
| | **Apologies:** | | |

**1/24** **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for the current meeting.

**2/24** **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

All members of the Corporation present declared that they had no interests, personal, fiduciary, or otherwise in any item on the agenda.

**3/24** **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 11 June 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 11 June 2024 had been circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration.
It was **RESOLVED** that members confirmed the minutes reflected an accurate record of the meeting and were approved by the members present.

**4/24** **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

None reported

**5/24** **Rolling Action List Update**

**1. 11 June 2024 Min 68/23 - Estates and Capital Report**

(i) UCO – The Principal to provide report to the Corporation at its 2 July 2024 meeting
(ii) Arrangements for approval process for UCO and Futsal to be agreed at Corporation meeting 2 July 2024**.**
It was **RESOLVED** this action was complete

**2. 11 June 2024 Min 71/23 - Treasury Report**

FD to review the cash balance and potential for increasing funds within the 35 day notice account
It was **RESOLVED** this action was complete

**3. 11 June 2024 Min 72/23 - Grants Report**
Requested an update be presented to the Corporation meeting in July on the progress being made to secure an extension from the DfE on the drawdown of grant for the Modular Building project
It was **RESOLVED** this action was complete

**6/24** The Chair proposed a change to the sequence of reporting with the following item brought forward on the agenda: Item 12 - Health and Safety Annual Report 2023-24
It was **RESOLVED** that members accepted the changes to the sequence of reporting.

**7/24** **Health and Safety Annual Report 2023-24 and Health and Safety Policy (Item 12)**

The Health and Safety Annual Report for 2023-24 had been prepared by Stephen Hurst (SH), Head of Estates and Facilities Management and previously circulated to members for consideration and information.

SH presented the report advising that the document outlined the progress on the College health and safety management programme in 2023-24 and he summarised the key points within the report.

- An annual review of the health and safety policy had been conducted and it was reported there were no legislative changes to the policy. Members reviewed and approved the policy as presented.
- The report summarised the health and safety and regulatory compliance at Oldham College, and the resultant corrective actions taken including the statistics collected from College reactive and active monitoring processes and procedures during the year commencing 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024.
- Accidents and Incidents – from September 2023 to August 2024 there has been a steady decline in work-related accidents/incidents – 46 compared to 34 in 22-23. Of these, 34 related to students, 10 related to staff and 2 related to a member of the public. Based on an average of 4500 students being enrolled, this equates to less than 1% of students having had an accident whilst in College during this period. SH observed that the low number of accidents/incidents gave confidence that the campus was being safely managed.
- It was reported there had been one RIDDOR reportable events throughout the year. SH provided details relating to the incident.
- It was reported there had been 4 near misses in year. The Chair sought assurance that improvements to monitoring processes relating to windows had been implemented **C** following a recent incident. SH provided clarity on the inspection process and timetable of checks advising these checks have increased. A governor reflected on the number of hand injuries and asked if consideration had been given to the wearing of **Q** protective gloves. In reply SH explained the current practise adding protective gloves have been used in some instances and the college will continue to look to the industry for good safety practice.
- There had been no environmental incidents during the reporting period.
- In answer to a question raised the Finance Director reported there had been no insurance claims in the reporting period.

**It was RESOLVED that the Committee received the H&S Annual report and Policy and recommended approval to the next Full Corporation meeting in October 2024.**

**5.15pm Stephen Hurst retired from the meeting**

**8/24** **<u>Capital Grants Report</u> (Item 6)**

The Finance Director had previously circulated to members for information a report detailing all capital grants received by the college up to 31 July 2024. The FD provided analysis of spend to date including how the college had benefitted from the funds and outlined the matched funding element.

The FD provided an update on the progress of the modular building project. She informed members that Governors have been kept up to date in prior meetings regarding various site issues impacting the project. One major issue discussed was the recent discovery of a high-voltage (HV) cable on the intended footprint, which has necessitated the relocation of the building. In addition, further delays have now arisen due to an objection raised by the Coal Authority Board. This has led to a requirement for additional drill and grout work on the site, which cannot commence for another five weeks. To mitigate further delays, a meeting was held week commencing 9th September 2024 with the project team, including the contractor, to assess the feasibility of commencing preliminary works before the drill and grout work. During this meeting, both the contractor and the environmental consultant confirmed that preliminary work could proceed. The contractor has advised they can begin this work on Monday, 16th September. From a grant management perspective, this early start is advantageous, as the project funding must be utilised by March 2025. Due to these unforeseen site issues the College's contribution to the project has increased by £233k to £332k. The FD reported she had gained Chair's approval for this increase on 13 September to avoid further delays and impact on the project. **<u>C</u>**

In discussion members sought assurance that funding would be spent in line with ESFA timeframe and considered the risks to drawing down funds should the contract be delayed further. Details relating to the delay were explored and the risks associated by the delay were also considered including contingency plans to increase the pace of the build. The FD informed members of the current timeline for spend which showed the majority of grant funding being spent on the build by the DfE end date of 31st March 2025. **<u>C</u>**

The Chair requested that regular updates on the build and spending timeline be shared with committee members to keep them informed of any risks associated with the spending profile.

**It was RESOLVED that:-**

**(i) members ratified the additional college contribution on the modular build contract to a maximum of £332k,**

**(ii) noted the delays associated with the modular build as reported**

**(iii) requested regular reports be circulated to the Resources Committee and Committee Chairs on the revised build and spend timeline for the modular build.**

**9/24** **<u>Management Accounts to the Year Ended 31st July 2024</u> (Item 7)**

A report detailing the draft management accounts for 2023/24 had been prepared by the Finance Director and previously circulated to members for consideration. She advised that the

EBITDA for the year was £3,703k (budget £2,634k). The Finance Director was pleased to report the financial position would be rated 'outstanding' as at 31st July 2024.

The Finance Director continued and summarised the key points from the report.

- Income for 16-18 year-old students, 19+ learners on continuing programmes and high needs learners was based on a lagged funding model and the funding was secure. It was reported student numbers had increased on the previous year.
- Tuition (Catch up) funding of £443k had been awarded to the College for 2023/24. The College utilised all of this allocation providing extra tuition to students as per the funding guidance
- It was reported Apprenticeship income for the year was £2,717k exceeding budget by £167k.
- HE income out turned at £3,074k compared to budget of £3,400k
- High Needs Income earned from the delivery to Higher Needs students has exceeded budget, an additional £430k has been included in the final outturn
- Grant project income exceeded budget by £577k due to additional grants received in year, including the additional Teachers' Pension Grant awarded due to the increase in the employer contribution, Turing grant, LSIF grant, and Innovate UK Greater Manchester Centre of Digital Innovation and Further Education Innovation Fund. The associated costs are included in non-pay/ pay costs
- Salary costs for the year finished £1,277k above budget, reflecting the annual pay award, band adjustments due to the real living wage rises and cost of living one off payment to staff.
- Non pay costs for the year were £710k above budget. It was reported this was primarily due to associated costs with the increased learner numbers which is reflected in additional spend on catering supplies, computer licences, exams.

**It was RESOLVED that:-**

**(i) Member's noted the College's 'outstanding' financial health status as at 31st July 2024, and**

**(ii) Members received the management accounts as at 31 July 2024 and presented them for approval to the Full Corporation at its October 2024 meeting**.

**10/24** **ESFA Two Year Plan to 31st July 2026 and Commentary Report (Item 8)**

A copy of the ESFA two-year financial plan (now referred to as the CFFR) had previously been circulated to members for information.

The FD provided clarity to each sub section in the report and members noted:-

- the 2023/24 outturn,
- noted the 2024/25 and 2025/26 forecast predict Financial Health of Outstanding rating,
- noted the short term financial priorities
- noted the cash outturn figure as at 31 July 2024
- noted the covenant compliance and also noted no additional long term borrowing was forecast.

The FD continued and presented the income and key assumptions for 16-18, 19+ ASB, Apprenticeships, HE, Advanced Learner Loans, LEA, grant income and tuition fees.

In discussion members debated the identified key financial risks documented in the report and the mitigating factors to control the risks.

**It was RESOLVED that**

**(i) Members received the report and adopted the two-year plan as reported, and**
**(ii) recommended approval to the Full Corporation.**

**11/24** **<u>UCO Financial Plan 2024-25 and HE Accommodation Action Plan</u> (Item 9)**

A report had previously been circulated that provided members with the 2023-24 financial outturn for UCO compared to the previous three years and the budget for 2024-25.

The Finance Director reported outturn for 2023/24 fell below targeted numbers and income and whilst making a gross contribution before estates costs, the loss is high when included. It was reported target numbers for 2024/25 are expected to be at a similar level to 2023/24, and no cost savings have been assumed.

A governor sought assurance in actions being taken to improve numbers, and in answer to a question raised the FD reported the 2024/25 budget recognises that the recovery in numbers will be gradual and that the curriculum developments, in particular the move to HTQs will take time and incur additional costs developing and creating demand for new qualifications. **<u>C</u>**

The FD continued and drew members attention to the Higher Education accommodation plan. A detailed discussion ensued and consideration was given to each objective in the plan, including future student numbers and curriculum, alignment of services, accommodation, financial implications and risk factors.

It was agreed SLT explore these factors and convene a further meeting to present costed options and risks associated with each option for the studio building, the UCO building and OC campus.

**It was RESOLVED that SLT progress the HE Accommodation Plan and report back to the Corporation in November 2024.**

**12/24** **<u>Treasury Position and Cash Flow</u> (Item 10)**

A report detailing the cash and treasury position of the College had been prepared by the Finance Director and previously circulated to members for consideration and information.

The Finance Director presented the report advising members of the cash position as at 30 September 2024 for each loan and overdraft / cash balance.

The Finance Director drew members' attention to the following:-

- The current budget and forecast balance sheet for the year-end was noted
- It was reported the College was not in breach of any of the revised loan covenants for the forecast year end. Noted the College are already in discussion with Santander regarding the covenants relating to the pension, and Santander are proposing to amend the covenants so the College are not unfairly penalised by fluctuations in this provision.

**It was RESOLVED that members noted the report as presented and endorsed the current position.**

**13/24** **<u>Risk Management Register</u> (Item 11)**

A copy of the Risk Management Register had previously been circulated to members for consideration. The Finance Director reported that the key operational risks had been updated and the mitigated risk scores adjusted to reflect the current position.

**It was RESOLVED that members noted the Risk Management Register as presented.**

**14/24** **Staff Equality and Diversity Report 2023-24 (Item 13)**

A copy of the Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2023-24 had previously been circulated to members prior to the meeting for consideration. The HR & OD Director guided members through the report and members considered the data sub sections, including;-

- Gender comparison – in 23/24 the split was 62.86% women vs 37.14% men (408 vs 241). Noted this is similar to the sector nationally.
- Gender split by age was reported (37.14% male vs 62.86% female)
- Ethnicity of workforce - Oldham College's staff population is predominantly White British 74.73% (which has slightly increased from last year's figure of 72.96%). The proportion of staff reporting as BME has remained shifted very slightly.
- Data showed 6.01% disclosed a disability, up very slightly compared to 22/23
- Age **-** The majority of the College's workforce (89%) are aged between 21 and 60. The two highest groups are the age sub groups of 51-60 and 41-50 respectively. In 2022/2023 the two highest groups were 31-40 and 51-60 so there is a shift towards the higher age groups.

**It was RESOLVED that members noted the report as presented**

**15/24** **Workforce Update (Item 14)**

A report had previously been circulated to members that provided an update on the core workforce. The HR Director guided members through the report. In summary:-

- Noted the headcount figure and the action to move away from reliance of agency staff
- Reported college's current annual turnover rate (all reasons) appears high at 25.78%. Discussion ensued and reasons for leaving were explored.
- Reported the college's resignation turnover rate is not significantly higher than the 2023 national average of 14.7%, according to Brightmine, and whilst given the recruitment and retention challenges in the Further Education (FE) sector, it was reported this rate was not overly concerning.
- Sickness absence - the twelve-month period ending 1st October 2023 showed an average of 7.3 days lost per employee, whilst this has reduced to 5.82 days lost for the most recent twelve-month period.
- Performance Development Review meetings – 72.53% complete. Reported the HR team and working proactively to improve the completion on PDRs.
- Reported a concerted effort to all staff to complete mandatory training was ongoing and was being closely monitored.

**It was RESOLVED that members received the report as presented.**

**16/24** **Contracts over £30k (Item 16)**

The Finance Director had previously circulated a report that detailed contracts awarded over £30k since the last meeting.

**It was RESOLVED that members noted the report as presented.**

**17/24** **Committee Workplan 2024/25 (Item 17)**

A copy of the Workplan for 2024/25 had previously been circulated to members for consideration and comment. Members noted the report.

**It was RESOLVED that members received the report as presented.**

**18/24** **Any Other Business**

A copy of the September 2024 ESFA letter to accounting officers had been provided to members for information.

**19/24** **Dates of future meetings for 2024-25**

Monday 9 December 2024

**Meeting finished at 6.30pm**

**Approved Date:**
**Chair's Signature:**

**Rolling Action List – Resources Committee 21 October 2024**

| Meeting Date(s) & Item No. | Rolling Action List | Actioner | Reported as Completed at meeting of |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21 10 24<br>Min 11/24 | **<u>UCO Financial Plan 2024-25 and HE Accommodation Action Plan</u>**<br>SLT to progress the HE Accommodation Plan<br>and convene a further meeting in November to present costed options and risks associated with each option for the studio building, the UCO building and OC campus prior. | SJ/RJ | |
| 21 10 24<br>Min 8/24 | **Capital Grants Report**<br>Requested regular reports be circulated to the Resources Committee and Committee Chairs on the revised build and spend timeline for the modular build. | RJ | |
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