

OLDHAM COLLEGE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Teams on Monday 9 December 2024

Present:	Members:	Sue Kershaw	Governor (Chair)
		Jonathan Edwards	Governor
		Simon Jordan	Governor (Principal)
		Alex Gardiner	Governor
		Adrian Barrass	Governor
		Catalina Cenusă	Student Governor
	Officers:	Rebecca Johnson	Finance Director
		Rachel James	Deputy Principal
		Lee Murphy	Head of IT
		Stephen Hurst	Head of Estates and Facilities Management
		Janet Frost	Clerk to the Corporation
	Apologies:	Danielle Vipond	Staff Governor
		Mashukul Hoque	Governor

20/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Danielle Vipond and Mashukul Hoque

21/24 **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

All officers present declared an interest in Item 10 – College Staff Annual Pay Review.

22/24 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 21 October 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 21 October 2024 had been circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes reflected a true record of the meeting.

23/24 **Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

25/26 **Rolling Action Update**

1. 21 October 2024 Min 11/24 - UCO Financial Plan 2024-25 and HE Accommodation Action Plan

SLT to progress the HE Accommodation Plan 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.

It was RESOLVED that following discussion at the current meeting this action was complete.

2. 21 October 2024 Min 8/24 - Capital Grants Report

Requested regular reports be circulated to the Resources Committee and Committee Chairs on the revised build and spend timeline for the modular build.

It was RESOLVED that following discussion at the current meeting this action was complete.

26/24

The Chair proposed a change to the sequence of reporting with the following item brought forward on the agenda: Item 9B Wifi Proposal, Item 12 IT Strategy Update and Item 16 Business Continuity Plan.

It was RESOLVED that members accepted the change to the sequence of reporting.

27/24

IT Strategy (Item 12)

A copy of the IT Strategy for 2024/2027 had previously been circulated to members. The Head of IT, Lee Murphy, reported the strategy has been designed in line with the current strategic plan, and based on the need to maintain the high standards whilst being proactive and following current trend and performing upgrades when necessary.

LM guided members through the strategy and summarised its aims and objectives. In discussion the following observations / comments were made:-

- Align the software strategy and Critical Incident Plan with the IT strategy
- Timeline for actions to be produced to include resources, staffing and funding
- BAU costs, monitoring and measurement of strategy to be carried out via business review process
- Noted IT risk register and detailed action plan is maintained and managed by the department
- Noted investment in the IT infrastructure in recent years has resulted in excellent systems in place
- Investment detailed in the strategy has been budgeted for in 24-25 financial plan.

The Chair thanked LM for his report

It was RESOLVED that members received the IT Strategy for 2024-27 as presented.

28/24

Wifi Proposal (Item 9B)

Lee Murphy, Head of IT, had previously circulated to members a report that provided details of the proposed new wifi solution and preferred provided including pricing comparison following the tender exercise and the implication and improvements of the proposed new system.

Members noted the technical information contained in the report, impact on staff and students and security measures as highlighted. Following detailed discussion on the merits of appointing Switchshop Ltd, members approved the tender sum of £225,858 for the delivery of the wifi solution as detailed in the report

It was RESOLVED that members recommended to the Corporation the wifi contract be awarded to Switchshop Ltd at the contract sum of £225,858.

29/24

Business Continuity Plan (Item 16)

A copy of the Business Continuity Plan was circulated to members for their review. It was reported that the document outlines the primary steps to be taken in an emergency situation to respond to any serious business disruption or disaster.

During the discussion, a member sought assurance that whilst the plan includes various scenarios to assist the reader, it should also include procedures to address a major cyber-attack on the college.

In discussion members observed and raised the following points:-

- Training to be provided to departments / faculties on how to implement the disaster recovery plan for their area of business. Report timeline for training at the next meeting
- Carry out actual simulation of scenarios to support the training
- Identify the priority for data reclamation
- Requested the Disaster Recovery Plan be shared at the March 2025 meeting.
- Noted the plan is reviewed annually (add date to plan)

It was RESOLVED that:-

(i) members approved the Business Continuity Plan

(ii) Requested consideration be given to the points raised and a further update on the matters discussed be presented to the March 2025 Resources Committee.

5.40pm Lee Murphy retired from the meeting

29/24

Health and Safety Update (Item 14)

Head of Estates and Facilities Management, Stephen Hurst, updated members on four recent incidents that had led to RIDDORs and the outcome of each incident and actions taken to reduce further incidences occurring.

In discussion the following observations were considered:-

Student Induction

- It was noted that the current induction process is effective, with technique training integrated into teaching delivery.
- This training approach has now been extended to the Multi-Skills Department.

Staff Training:

- Staff receive tailored induction and Health & Safety training based on their specific roles.
- All staff are required to complete annual online Health & Safety training

Review of 'Near Misses'

- A review is underway to analyse trends in 'near miss' incidents, enabling the implementation of targeted training to reduce future occurrences.
- Efforts are focused on fostering a culture where staff learn from mistakes and take ownership of responsibilities.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the report and actions being taken to improve health and safety at college.

5.46pm - Stephen Hurst retired from the meeting

30/24

Financial Statements for 2023/24 (inc. Bad Debt Write Off) (Item 6)

A report detailing the financial statements for 2023/24 had been prepared by the Finance Director and previously circulated to members for consideration. The FD guided members

through the report and clarified the accounting changes relating to holiday accrual, pension valuation and teacher's pensions.

The FD drew member's attention to the debtor's ledger and noted the approach taken to recoverability and the recommendation of bad debt provision within the report of £20,569 (2023 £61,685). It was reported the team would continue to chase those debts which they felt were recoverable even though the provision had been made. Members approved the bad debt provision as reported.

Consideration was given to the severance payments in year and details of each were noted.

It was RESOLVED that:-

- (i) members approved the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2024 , and**
- (ii) approved the bad debt provision of £20,569.**

31/24

Management Accounts for October 2024 (Item 7)

A copy of the management accounts up to October 2024 had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Finance Director drew members attention to the following key points:-

- The EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax and depreciation) for the three months was reported as £1,094k (budget £1,110k),
- All income streams continue to be closely monitored to ensure income targets are achieved. Reported Adult is on target, Apprenticeship and HE slightly above target at the current reporting stage.
- Grant income continues to be received, and income from Innovate UK has increased the budget figure by £188k
- Pay costs – above budget by £90k for the period. The budget allows for the proposed annual staff pay rise
- In answer to a question raised relating to non pay costs which showed over budget it was reported this was due to spend profiling at the start of the academic year and associated grant spend.

It was RESOLVED that members received the management accounts as at October 2024.

32/34

Treasury Position and Cash Flow (Item 8)

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 31 October 2024 for each loan and cash balance. A discussion took place and the following points were highlighted:

- The college continued to monitor the cash balance daily
- The FD provided members with an update on the deposit accounts and loan position
- The current budget and forecast balance sheet for the year were in line with the ESFA CFFR forecast model
- It was agreed that the FD will approach Santander to discuss and reach an agreement regarding the potential impact of pensions on the covenants, ensuring that the college is not directly affected

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

33/24 Capital Grants Update (Item 7.1)

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

Of note; the RAAC funding has been granted for the demolition of the Grange Theatre and tenders costs approved for its demolition, and the Higher Technical Education Skills Fund has been granted and must be spent by 31 March 2025.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the report as presented.

34/24 Update on Modular Building (Item 9A)

A report had previously been circulated to members to update them on the progress of the construction of the modular building and costing implications. Progress included:-

- Contract signed and Springfield and Fewes Buildings ordered
- Revised forecast reported and included the additional costs associated with the planning issues and objections to planning by the coal authority
- Meeting scheduled for 12 December 2024 to review schedule of works and timing of spend.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the progress on the construction of the modular building.

35/24 College Staff Annual Pay Review 2024/25 (Item 10)

A report had previously been circulated that provided members with the College's proposal regarding the 2024/25 pay review.

The HR Director, Claire Symons, spoke to the report advising of the rationale for the proposal, including the financial and ongoing recruitment and retention implications. She reported the 2024/25 budget was built on the assumption that the proposed pay rise would be recommended.

In discussion members explored the impact of the proposed offer on the current and future years budget, reflected on recent union feedback, comparison to GM colleges current pay scales and likely awards and impact on recruitment and retention of staff. It was also noted that the college is committed to being a 'real' living wage employer and this would continue. A comprehensive discussion took place, resulting in the agreement to conduct a strategic review of salaries. This review will focus on accelerating the college's pay scale to align with GM standards, while considering budget constraints, potential risks and funding limitations.

It was RESOLVED that:-

- (i) members recommended approval to the Corporation of 4% pay rise for 2024/25,**
- (ii) members recommended approval to the Corporation of the real living wage hourly rate rising from £12.00 to £12.60 (5% pay increase)**
- (iii) agreed an additional increment to the FE teaching grade (unqualified staff) to take the salary cap to circa £29.5k;**

(iv) agreed two additional increments to the FE teaching grade (qualified staff) to take the salary cap to above £40k;

36/24 UCO Update Report (Item 11)

The Principal provided a summary report detailing the options considered relating to the position of Oldham College university curriculum provision and facilities. An update on each of the options was provided noting that costings have been requested for the re-modelling of the Studio Building and following this funding streams will be explored.

It was agreed SLT continue to progress this matter and provide an update to the Corporation at its December meeting on the timeline for decision making.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the report as presented.

37/24 Risk Management Register (Item 13)

The Finance Director reported that the key operational risks had been updated since the previous meeting and the mitigated risk scores adjusted to reflect the current position.

It was agreed the Risk Register continue to be updated and reported to Corporation so it can manage and develop strategies and management solutions to address the risks.

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

38/24 Financial Regulations (Item 15)

A copy of the Financial Regulations had previously been circulated to members for their consideration. It was reported there were no changes to report.

It was RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations as presented were recommended for approval to the Full Corporation at its December 2024 meeting.

39/24 Fees Policy 2025/26 (Item 17.1)

A copy of the revised Fees Policy for 2025/26 had previously been circulated to members for consideration prior to the meeting. The Finance Director reported the changes to the policy reflect the updates to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Funding Rules and Requirements, noting the updates relate specifically to the remission of fees and the revised low wage threshold including income based employment benefits.

Members noted the changes.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the Fees Policy 2025/26 as presented.

40/24 HE Fees 2026/27 (Item 17.2)

A report has previously been circulated that updated members on the UCO fee structure for 2025/26. Members agreed the fees as detailed.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the HE Fees for 2026/27 as presented.

41/23 Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Policy (Item 17.4)

A copy of the Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Policy was presented to members for consideration. Members noted the policy and approved it with no changes.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Policy as presented.

42/24 Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy (Item 17.4)

A copy of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy was presented to members for consideration. Members noted the policy and approved it with no changes.

It was RESOLVED that members approved the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy as presented.

43/24 Contracts over £30k (Item 18)

A report had previously been circulated that detailed all contracts awarded over £30k since the previous meeting.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the report.

44/24 Workplan 2024/25 (Item 19)

A copy of the Workplan for 2024/25 including changes to the reporting sequence for the current meeting was presented to members for consideration. Members noted the changes to the workplan.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the report.

45/24 Any Other Business

None reported.

46/24 Dates of future meetings for 2024/25

11 March 2025

17 June 2025

Meeting finished at 7.00pm

Signed: Date:
Chair

Rolling Action List – Resources Committee 9 December 2024

Meeting Date(s) & Item No.	Rolling Action List	Actioner	Reported as Completed at meeting of
21 10 24 Min 11/24	<u>UCO Financial Plan 2024-25 and HE Accommodation Action Plan</u> SLT to progress the HE Accommodation Plan 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	09 12 24 Min 25/26.1
21 10 24 Min 8/24	Capital Grants Report Requested regular reports be circulated to the Resources Committee and Committee Chairs on the revised build and spend timeline for the modular build.	RJ	09 12 24 Min 25/26.1
09 12 24 Min 29/24	Business Continuity Plan Training to be provided to departments / faculties on how to implement the disaster recovery plan for their area of business. Report timeline for training at the next meeting Carry out actual simulation of scenarios to support the training Identify the priority for data reclamation Requested the Disaster Recovery Plan be shared at the March 2025 meeting. Noted the plan is reviewed annually (add date to plan)	RJ	
09 12 24 Min 35/24	Staff Annual Pay Award 2024 A comprehensive discussion took place, resulting in the agreement to conduct a strategic review of salaries	CS	

