



Croydon
College



COULSDON
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



Croydon
University
Centre

MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 6.00pm
in person meeting
Room 422 Croydon Campus

MINUTES

Present: Andrew Lowe (Chair)
Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)
Tony Stevenson
Nasim Jivani Hemani
Catherine Boyd Maunsell
Niral Patel

In attendance: Ann-Christine Harland (VP Finance and Resources)
Helen Langford (Head of HR) – Item 6

Clerk: Clare Mitchell, Director of Governance

1.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
3.	<p>Financial Monitoring and Forecast Report as at 30 September 2023</p> <p>This report summarised the College’s financial performance for the two months to 30 September 2023. It was too early in the year to report on actual income generated. Other income receipts were based on actual cash activity up to 30 September. Increased pay costs would be reflected in the forecast once the grant income was known.</p> <p>Although higher than forecast the number of 16-18 enrolments for 2023/24 had dropped from the figures reported to the Board on 18 October. It was unlikely that the College would be eligible for additional in year funding. To date there had been a significant overspend on the pay budget. One of the reasons for this was that it had been necessary to recruit additional staff to support the increase in the number of high needs students who had enrolled. Additional income could be claimed for these students. The staffing budget for each curriculum area would be reviewed as it was possible that some areas were overstaffed given the pattern of enrolments.</p> <p>At this stage the forecast was still for a deficit of £145K at year end.</p> <p>The Committee <u>discussed</u> the management accounts for September 2023.</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Key Issues – Finance and Estates</p> <p>As stated above the number of 16-18 students enrolled had decreased. There had been 21 exclusions ytd on disciplinary grounds. Plans were in place to recruit further 16-18 students in January 2024 to meet local demand.</p> <p>The outcome of the College’s bid for funding to support the retrofit of the sports hall at the Coulsdon Campus was not yet known. The College continued to work with Vital Energi to develop plans for the Croydon Campus which would enable the College to work towards its net zero target. Initial costings for the Croydon Campus indicated that grant funding of only 48% was likely to be available for a £4.4m project. Energy costs would also increase pa.</p> <p>The Committee was asked for its views on maintaining the College’s current strategy of achieving zero carbon by 2030. The Committee’s view was that the retrofit of the sports hall at the Coulsdon Campus should be seen as a pilot. A Board decision would need to be taken on whether the College should keep to its 2030 target as part of the development of the new strategic plan. There needed to be a clear understanding of the costs and the consequences for the College.</p> <p>ACTION: VPF&R to circulate the GLA decarbonisation strategy to members</p> <p>The VPF&R provided an update on the classroom of the future. The College was refreshing the ICT/ILT Strategy 2024–2029 in conjunction with the main College strategy. The focus was turning to the move to online exams announced by the AQA board and the use of AI in assignment marking and exams.</p> <p>A settlement had been agreed for Phase 1 of the flood insurance claim. Phase 2 was not yet settled. Plans were being gathered for works in the summer of 2024/25.</p> <p>Due to a late start and long programme for the contractors proposed by Croydon Council, the College had appointed its own contractors to refurbish the SEND rooms at the Croydon Campus.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the key issues paper.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Draft Financial Statements 2022/23</p> <p>The Committee noted the key points in the cover paper. The VPF&R explained that it had been necessary to obtain a report from Lambert Smith Hampton, which confirmed that the value of the Selhurst site had not decreased and the figure on the balance sheet did not need to be adjusted.</p> <p>The risk to improving the College’s Ofsted grade would be reviewed following the Ofsted monitoring visit.</p> <p>Any corrections to the financial statement should be submitted to the VPF&R.</p> <p>The Committee recommended the draft financial statements for 2022/23 to the Board for approval.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Human Resources Update</p> <p>The HoHR presented the key points from the HR update. The main focus of HR support in recent months had been on performance improvement and case work at</p>

	<p>the Coulsdon Campus. The HoHR gave an update on changes in staffing and the number of staff on performance improvement plans. The HR team were also dealing with a number of grievances across the College.</p> <p>Retention figures had improved, particularly for Learning Support Practitioners where turnover had been high. The first corporate induction event had taken place for new starters at the end of September. Discussions would be taking place with this group of staff about how to increase staff engagement. There remained a risk that the Ofsted judgement in February 2023 would result in an increase in staff turnover. There had been an internal audit on staff retention in 2022/23, which had resulted in a number of actions, but overall the conclusion had been positive.</p> <p>The Committee asked whether the retention of personal data had formed part of the internal audit. The HoHR stated that it had not but this was an area that need to be reviewed. The College could not accept CVs because of the requirements of the Guidance on Safer Recruitment. The HoHR was asked to review whether application forms could be prepopulated with information from LinkedIn to speed up the process. The VPF&R reported that there would be an internal audit of GDPR this term.</p> <p>Action: HoHR to review whether application forms could be prepopulated with information from LinkedIn to speed up the process.</p> <p>The College's FREDIE accreditation was for two years before re-assessment. The EDI Committee was being refreshed into a FREDIE Committee to take forward further work in this area.</p> <p>The annual appraisal process had begun for completion by 15 December 2023. A review was taking place to explore whether iTrent was the best tool for the appraisal process.</p> <p>The HR strategy would be reviewed to ensure that it was in line with the new strategic plan. A staff survey would be sent out in April 2024.</p> <p>The attached HR report included information on impact of the actions from 2022/23 and plans for 2023/24.</p> <p>The Committee approved the gender pay gap and ethnicity reports for publication in March 2024. The HoHR was congratulated on the progress in both areas.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the HR update and the HR annual report.</p>
7.	<p>Operational and Quality Improvement Plan (OQIP) Final Update 2022/23</p> <p>The Committee noted the updated OQIP. Most of the relevant actions had been completed. Where they had not been completed they would be carried forward into 2023/24.</p>
8.	<p>Annual Health and Safety Report 2022/23</p> <p>The Committee noted the Annual Health and Safety Report for 2022/23. Teaching on electric vehicles would begin in October 2023 but until the concerns about charging electric cars had been resolved, they would only be charged when attended. The College's insurers were involved in discussions about any mitigating measures that might need to be put in place to reduce fire risk.</p>

	<p>The asbestos registers were now far more up to date following the FECTF and insurance estates work. In future, contingency would need to be included in the programmes for estates work to all for additional time and cost if asbestos was found during the works.</p> <p>The numbers in the report were incorrect and would be amended by the VPF&R.</p> <p>Action: VPF&R to correct the numbers in the Annual Health and Safety Report 2022/23</p>
9.	<p>Sustainability Strategy Report 2022/23</p> <p>The Committee noted the Sustainability Strategy Report for 2022/23. The VPF&R was keen to increase student engagement in this area. In response to a question from the Committee, the VPF&R stated that the College did not have the resources to review the sustainability of its supply chain.</p>
10.	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>The VPF&R reported that the risk register had been updated so that it only included twelve key risks. Four were for review by the Finance and Resources Committee. These related to recruitment of staff in specialist areas, maintaining good financial health, IT developments (including AI and Cyber risks) and continuing to develop the estate, including sustainability objectives.</p> <p>In terms of the HR risk, consideration was being given to reviewing notice periods across both campuses. In terms of the IT risk, multi factor authentication had successfully been introduced for students.</p> <p>The Committee asked for future versions of the report to include an overview of changes in scoring over time. The Chair asked for this to be available for all 12 risks at Board meetings.</p> <p>Action: VPF&R - risk Register for F&R and Board to include an overview of changes in risk scoring over time</p> <p>The gross and net risks had been re-assessed for the Autumn term 2023. Three of the above risks continued to be rated as potential concern. The IT risk was now assessed as acceptable given that all of the mitigations that were possible at this time were now in place.</p> <p>The Committee APPROVED the relevant risks for submission to the Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Committee did not identify a specific area for a risk deep dive at its next meeting.</p>
11.	<p>Policy Updates</p> <p>The Committee approved the HE Tuition Fees for 2024/25. There were no changes from the fees charged in 2023/24.</p> <p>The VPF&R explained that the College did not have a licence to recruit additional international students at the current time. The College's costs were higher for these students, hence the higher fee.</p>

	<p>The College's HE fees were very competitive compared to other providers and numbers needed to grow from a low base.</p> <p>Responding to a question, the VPPF&R reported that there had been low enrolment on the HNC courses because of late marketing. Marketing should have taken place during the validation process with Pearson.</p>
12.	<p>Minutes of the Part 1 meeting held on 14 June 2023</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting were <u>approved</u> as a correct record.</p>
13.	<p>Matters Arising not on the Agenda</p> <p>The Committee <u>noted</u> the updated action list. The actions relating to the flood insurance claim had been completed and would be removed from the action list.</p> <p>ACTION: DoG to remove the actions relating to the flood insurance claim from the action list</p> <p>The VPF&R reported that the estates strategy needed to be updated with revised guided learning hours, the ICTL strategy, and the plans for the lower ground floor following the flood. This information would help determine the new space requirements and how much extra capacity there was at the Croydon Campus.</p>
14.	<p>Post Meeting Reflection/Self-Assessment</p> <p>The DoG took the Committee through the results of the annual committee self-assessment questionnaire. The Committee felt that Governor input into the development of the new strategic plan helped with understanding how the Committee should oversee the relevant aspects of the strategic plan. The Committee's view was that the length of the meeting pack and presentation of papers had improved overall. The HoHR would be asked to highlight the main points from the HR update paper and the Committee asked if she would be able to attend the whole of F&R meetings in future.</p> <p>Action: DoG to ask the HoHR to highlight the main points from her update paper at future meetings</p> <p>Action: DoG to ask the HoHR if she would be able to attend the whole of F&R meetings in future</p> <p>To ensure prompt communications to Governors, the Chair should communicate directly with Governors when the DoG, who worked part time, was unavailable.</p> <p>The overall assessment of the Committee's performance in 2022/23 was good.</p>
15.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>There were no items of other business.</p>
16.	<p>Dates of future meetings</p> <p>Wednesday 28 February 2024 - 6pm to 8pm in person at the Croydon Campus Wednesday 12 June 2024 - 6pm to 8pm in person at the Croydon Campus</p>

*Approved as an accurate record by the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on
6 March 2024*

*Clare Mitchell
Director of Governance*