

Preston College

**Redacted and Abridged <sup>1</sup>Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022  
at 5.30pm via Zoom**

**Present:**

Mr S Edwards	Chair
Mrs L Doswell	Principal and Chief Executive
Mr J Boydell	(from minute 5)
Mr S Browne	
Ms J Jones	

**In attendance:**

Mrs V Caparros	Head of School – Skills Development, ESOL and Community (Until Minute 5)
Mrs C Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Mr S Nixon	Executive Director Resources
Ms G Thornton	Head of Human Resources

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair welcomed and introduced Mrs Caparros, Head of School – Skills Development, ESOL and Community, who would present item 5.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

The Clerk referred to the interest of Ms Thornton and all Senior Post Holders in item 16. The Committee noted that the Clerk would advise further at the start of the item.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

The Committee agreed the Minutes of the Resources meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021 as a correct record.

**Resolved: the Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were approved.**

**4. Matters arising**

The Committee noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.**

**5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Update – Equality Objectives**

Mrs Caparros, presented her Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) – Update report making reference to:

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes.

- her role at the College and her role as a diversity assessor which enabled her to review EDI best practice across many UK colleges;
- the revised EDI corporate objectives approved by the Board in 2021 and the importance of the College demonstrating its inclusivity by recording EDI initiatives;
- the College had been awarded the AoC Beacon Award 2019/20 for support for learners;
- the proposed revisions to the College's Equality Statement, at Appendix A, including introduction of the Freddie principles and the College's adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) statement;
- the establishment of a Cross College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and the work of the group to date;
- one of the key priorities for the EDI group for 2022 was to develop the first draft of the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for review by key stakeholders and the Resources Committee;
- College EDI initiatives such as meetings of the LGBTQ group and that the College had signed up to the Association of Colleges Sport Inclusion Hub with learner ambassadors for Inclusion, Mental Health and 'This Girl Can';
- at its next meeting the EDI group would receive presentations from the College's student inclusion ambassadors.

Mrs Caparros referred to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learner Review 2020/21, at Appendix B, and highlighted:

- when comparing 16-18, adult (Higher Education) and apprenticeships it was noted that the achievement averages for apprenticeships were lower than those of classroom learners and that apprenticeships had been made greatly affected by the pandemic;
- for ethnicity the achievement gap had closed and was above national benchmarks with the exception of gypsy/Irish traveller and, whilst this was a small demographic of learners at the College, closing the achievement gap in this area would still be a focus for 2021/22;
- in 2020/21 the College recruited broadly equal numbers of male and female learners, with both genders achieving similarly and above national benchmarks;
- learners with learning difficulties were given additional support and achieved on equal level to their peers. Mrs Caparros referred to a recent internship with Lancashire County Hall following which 100% of interns had found employment;
- the College recruited a significant proportion of learners from the most deprived social economic wards and achievement for learners was equitable across all areas. In addition, those learners living in the most deprived wards achieved significantly above the national averages.

The Clerk referred to the Equal Opportunities Monitoring/Diversity and Inclusion Report, at Appendix C, which included Board demographic data as of July 2021. She explained that the Board size was 14 at this date as the student governors had left, two governors had just left and the Board was also carrying vacancies.

Following a question on why there was less diversity in the apprenticeships cohort, Ms Capparos confirmed this was reflected in the sector. She outlined the possible drivers for this and efforts by the College to improve diversity, including raising awareness of the apprenticeship pathway with ESOL learners and sharing successful apprenticeship case studies.

The Committee discussed and noted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learner Review 2020/21 and congratulated everyone at the College for the success in closing achievement gaps across demographic groups. Members commented positively on the report and evident enthusiasm and passion for helping all learners achieve. Members agreed that the College's work in supporting all learners was an important part of the College's journey to outstanding. Members agreed that the work of the College in closing achievement gaps related to EDI was outstanding, particularly given the social economic factors in some areas of Preston. The Committee requested that narrative case studies on the College's work should be prepared to share the success stories across College, with the Board, the wider community and as part of future inspections.

The Clerk reported that the Learner Review 2020/21, Staff Profile 2020/21 and the Board demographic data would be compiled into an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2020/21 which would be reviewed by the Board at its next meeting and published on the College's website.

The Committee approved the draft College Equality Statement, at Appendix A, for recommendation to the Board.

**Resolved: The Committee:**

- **noted the report and plans for the development of a College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy;**
- **approved the draft College Equality Statement, at Appendix A, for recommendation to the Board.**

**Action: To develop narrative case studies on the College's work to share the success stories across College, with the Board, the wider community and as part of future inspections.**

**6. Management Accounts**

Mr Nixon, Executive Director of Resources, presented his report on the Period 5 Management Accounts.

Mr Nixon responded to queries on performance compared to budget to date. It was noted that whilst the Committee would start considering staff pay awards and advise the Board, the final decision did not need to be made until later in the academic year.

The Committee noted the Period 5 Management Accounts at Appendix A and the associated commentary at Appendix B.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Period 5 Management Accounts and commentary.**

**7. Performance against Key Performance Indicators**

Mr Nixon presented the Performance against KPIs for Period 5.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the report on KPIs for Period 5.**

## 8. Fees Policy 2022/23

Mr Nixon outlined the proposed changes to the Fees Policy 2022/23 which were shown in track changes at Appendix A. He outlined the key changes:

- the inclusion of the National Skills Fund, which was separate to the Adult Education Budget and has been established to help adults gain valuable skills, at Level 3, to improve their job prospects;
- the removal of Derby University from the policy, as this partnership had concluded;
- clarification that Apprenticeship End Point Assessment resit costs would be charged to the employer.

Mr Nixon responded to queries from members on the proposed changes and how the College managed the balance of maximising fees income alongside learners' ability to pay. Mr Nixon undertook to provide further information on impact assessments in the cover paper to the Board.

Following discussion it was agreed that the sentence "*This will displace other fees and funding*" should be removed. With this amendment the Committee agreed to recommend the revised Fees Policy 2022/23 to the Board for approval.

**Resolved: The Committee agreed to recommend the revised Fees Policy 2022/23 to the Board for approval, with the sentence: *This will displace other fees and funding* removed.**

**Action: Mr Nixon to provide further information on impact assessments in the cover paper to the Board.**

## 9. People Strategy Action Plan Update

Ms Thornton, Head of Human Resources, presented her People Strategy Action Plan Update report which provided a mid-year update. She reported:

- that six of the 18 actions had been achieved;
- a number of activities added were driven by third party changes from ESFA and DfE, in addition to those identified as College priorities;
- an overarching People Strategy would be developed for 2022/23 and would be presented to the Committee in the summer term for approval for recommendation to Board.

The Committee noted the People Strategy Action Plan update.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the People Strategy Action Plan update.**

## 10. HR Workforce Profile Data Report 2020/21

Ms Thornton presented the HR Workforce Profile Data Report 2020/21 which provided an overview of the diversity of the College in 2020/21 alongside comparison with the previous year and other FE benchmarks. Ms Thornton reported:

- that the census data used was from the 2011 census as the 2021 census data would not be released until later in 2022;

- that the data had been compared to Association of Colleges (AoC) survey November 2021 based on 2019/20 as ESFA workforce data for 2020/21 had not been published to date;
- a report on staff turnover;
- that the increased headcount for 2020/21 was mainly due to the in-year transfer of catering staff from Chartwells to the College and additional posts created to address the increase in learner pastoral needs;
- that, as the workforce had remained stable, there was little change in relation to the staff diversity profile compared to the previous year;
- that the College had an older workforce as many staff joined the College to teach as a second career. However, the College had achieved some success in encouraging recruiting younger teaching staff;
- on the importance of the College workforce being representative of the local community and initiatives to achieve this, in particular to encourage more job applications from Asian/Asian British/ Pakistan demographic;
- that when assessing the progress of employees and their ethnicity, the benchmark figure of employees earning over £20,000 would be reviewed;
- the increase in employees not declaring their sexual orientation had been explored. This was an operational issue when staff transferred and had been resolved;
- it was apparent that not all staff with disabilities declared this on appointment.

The Committee noted the HR Workforce Profile Data Report 2020/21 and discussed with management the possibility that the introduction of the new Hybrid Working Policy for staff might encourage younger people and those looking for a better work/life balance to apply for jobs at the College.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the HR Workforce Profile Data Report 2020/21.**

## 11. **Employment Policies Update**

### a) **Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature Policy**

Ms Thornton reported that the procedure for Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature was being developed and a policy had been developed, at Appendix A, for review by the Committee.

The Committee discussed the draft policy with management. Members agreed that it would be helpful for the policy to include further detail of how it would be applied in practice. The Committee noted that in general the committees reviewed and approved policies and ELT approved procedures, which were operational. However, there were

some procedures such as whistleblowing and disciplinary, which were also reviewed and approved by committees and the Board. It was noted that the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature procedure was under development, in consultation with the unions, and had not been available in time for the meeting. Members commented on the importance of the Resources Committee and the Board having access to the associated Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature Procedure when reviewing the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature Policy. Members highlighted potential serious risks relating to safeguarding and the accountability of the Board which had a duty of care to employees and learners.

Following discussion with management and the Clerk the Committee agreed:

- the principles of the procedure should be included in the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature policy;
- the associated procedure should be clearly signposted in the policy including where the procedure could be found;
- where possible detailed “worked examples” should be included in the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature policy;
- as the Board would be held accountable for adherence to the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature policy it was important that the Board had oversight of the associated procedure and oversight of any learnings from implementation of the policy and procedure;
- any policy documents should be understandable and accessible for all users staff and learners.

The Clerk explained that as the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature policy and its associated procedure were new, they were not currently included on the Schedule of Delegation. She undertook to ensure these documents were added when the Schedule of Delegation was next reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee and the Search and Governance Committee could also review of whether the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature Procedure required Board approval.

#### **b) Hybrid Working Policy**

Ms Thornton presented the revised Hybrid Working Policy, at Appendix B, which had been revised at the request of the Resources Committee following its review at the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Ms Thornton explained that the name of the policy had changed from Remote Working Policy to Hybrid Working Policy and the rationale for this.

Ms Thornton highlighted the importance of ensuring staff understood the difference between the working from home policy in place during Covid and the Hybrid Working Policy.

Ms Thornton outlined the additional changes made to the policy, shown in track changes.

The Committee agreed that all the requested amendments had been made and approved the Hybrid Working Policy for recommendation to the Board.

**Resolved: The Committee approved the Hybrid Working Policy for recommendation to the Board.**

**Actions: Ms Thornton to revise the draft Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature Policy in response to feedback from the Committee.**

**The Clerk to ensure that the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature Policy was added to the Schedule of Delegation when the schedule was next reviewed and for the Search and Governance Committee to review if the Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature procedure required Resource Committee/ Board approval and advise the Board.**

## 12. Gender Pay Gap Report

Ms Thornton presented her Gender Pay Gap Report. She reported:

- the Gender Pay Gap Report 2022 for publication was at Appendix A and Gender Pay Gap Background Information at Appendix B;
- that as a public sector body the College was required to publish its Gender Pay Gap (GPG) data on the Government and College website by 30 March 2022 using a snapshot of data based on the staffing establishment on the 31 March 2021;
- the analysis showed that the College continued to hold a GPG that was significantly lower than average across the sector;
- the mean College GPG for 2021 was 5.65% an increase from 2.36% in 2020. The median GPG was 12.53% compared with 12.46% in 2020;
- drivers for the increase including the TUPE of the catering staff from Chartwells to the College which had increased the number of females in the lower quartile. Many of the female employees in the bottom two earning quartiles were part time, term time only or both, which impacted on the mean earnings. In contrast, there were fewer males with part time or term time contract;
- the upper middle quartile showed a difference in the proportion of females (61%) and males (39%) and a slight move towards a more even split when compared with the lower and lower middle quartiles. The upper middle quartile had moved towards the trend compared with the 59% female and 41% male in 2020 and 55% female and 45% male in 2019;
- the GPG for 2021/22 which would be published in 2023, showed a slight improvement;
- staff were more predominately male in areas such as construction and engineering and the likelihood that salaries would increase in areas such as construction due to the shortage of teaching staff across the sector.

The Committee noted and discussed the report with management. During discussion members noted:

- the GPG report calculated the difference between average hourly earnings of men and women rather than levels of pay for men and women in the same job but focused on;
- a pay scale was in place for all jobs at the College and new starters were placed on the pay scale on appointment.

The Committee recommend to the Board the approval the Gender Pay Gap Report, at Appendix A, for publication within the legislative timeframe.

**Resolved: The Committee:**

- **agreed to recommend to the Board the approval the Gender Pay Gap Report, at Appendix A, for publication within the legislative timeframe; and**
- **noted the proposed actions arising from the Gender Pay Gap data contained within the Continuous Improvement Action Plan.**

**13. Internal Audit Planning 2021/22**

The Clerk referred members to the Internal Audit Plan report and plans for internal audits from 2021/22 onwards. She referred to the request from the Audit Committee for all committees to review the Audit Needs Assessment (ANA) produced by Wylie and Bisset, the College's new auditors, and provide any feedback from the prospective of their Committee. Mr Browne, as a member of the Audit Committee, provided further background.

The Committee noted the Internal Audit Plan report and the ANA and due to time constraints agreed to forward any feedback on the ANA to the Clerk.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Internal Audit Plan report and the ANA.**

**Actions: Members to forward any feedback on the ANA to the Clerk.**

**14. Date of Next Meeting:**

Members noted the date of the next meeting was 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022.