

AREHAM COLLEGE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

22 June 2022

THIS MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

MINUTES

Present: Frances Butler
Mark Hoban (Chair for this meeting)
Andrew Kaye
Karen Shreves

In attendance: Kevin Briscoe (Chair of the Corporation)
Richard Bryant (Deputy Principal, Finance & Resources)
Georgina Flood (Head of Governance)
Laura Jelley (Head of People & Culture)

The meeting was preceded by a deep dive presentation on Employee Value Proposition by Head of People & Culture Laura Jelley.

Members commended the work completed since the last meeting and endorsed the modelling of flexible working by members of College Leadership Team.

Q. A member queried if the EVP had been compared to other local Colleges?

A. HPC confirmed this has been created working closely with the marketing team since the feel and fit needs to be modern and in keeping with wider comms, but wider comparison of 'offer' hasn't taken place however they agreed this would be worthwhile.

Q. A member queried how they felt the EVP will fit into recruitment

A. HPC noted they hoped a public EVP will set the tone and expectation about working at the College and be a powerful message to be used in our recruitment campaigns and our web/career sites about us and our Culture.

Members discussed the use of agencies in recruitment and affirmed the importance of ensuring that any EVP and wider company information is passed onto potential candidates ensuring brand identity.

16/22 Item 1: Declarations of Interest

Members of the Committee were reminded of the need to declare any personal or financial interest in any item of business to be considered during the meeting. There were no declarations of interest.

17/22 Item 2: Apologies for absence and welcome to new members

Apologies for absence were received from Governors' Karen Woods and Andy Wannell. It was noted Andy Wannell would be in attendance for the Private & Confidential section of the agenda. Anoushka Ottley (Managing Director, Business & Partnerships) also provided her apologies.

18/22 Item 3: Minutes of the Meeting held on the 16 March 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 March 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

There were no matters arising from them which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

19/22 Item 4. Items of Focus

The Chair noted that Items 7ii 'Budget and 3-year plan' and the Item 11 'Pay review recommendation for 2022-23' would be key items of focus for the Committee.

20/22 Item 5. Health and Safety Termly report

DPF&R provided an overview to the termly update and highlighted key highlights as follows:

- Two medium risk action outstanding from the last Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) being addressed over the summer
- General Risk Assessment – several areas (notably in construction trades) that overdue risk assessment review. Overall, there is a 78% compliance rate of risk assessments in the last 12 months
- Technician review meetings - ongoing work to develop relationship between the HSO and technicians, increased technicians basic training to include IOSH.
- Heat map audits and the current H&S action tracker remain under review
- Hazard reporting remains low and still mainly led by the HSO

Q. A members requested that 'imminent' is replaced with a specific date in future reporting

A. DP F&R agreed.

Q. A member queried if we are confident the introduction of 'heat maps' explains the increase in incidents?

A. DPF&R confirmed yes, we do feel there was under-reporting, we can track and see the trends e.g., over busy times, accidents increase e.g., Xmas, which means we can adjust to compensate e.g., less covers in the restaurant over the Xmas period.

Q. A member of the Committee queried if several actions on the tracker took 93 days to be resolved?

A. DPF&R agreed he would check the detail of this with the HSO and update accordingly.

The Principal requested an update on the maintenance hole cover incident discussed at the last meeting. The DPF&R confirmed all covers have now been screwed down. We recognise the potential flooding risk and have added in extra checks of covers after heavy rain.

21/22 Item 6: Strategic and Quality Improvement Plan

The Principal provided a brief overview of the SP&QIP (Strategic Priorities and Quality Improvement Plan) areas allocated for review by the F&R Committee. It was agreed since there was significant overlap, to discuss under Item 8i.

Members of the Committee reviewed and noted the Strategic and Quality Improvement Plan

22/22 Item 7i: Management Accounts as of 31 May 2022

Members of the Committee received a confidential paper on the Management Accounts as of 31 May 2022. Due to the nature of this confidential discussion this item is subject to separate minute.

Members of the Finance and Resources Committee reviewed the contents of the paper and noted the current financial position

23/22 Item 7iii: Capital Projects update

The Committee received a report circulated in advance, providing an overview of current capital projects and an outline of suggested projects for the year ahead. Due to the confidential nature of this item, it is subject to separate minute.

24/22 Item 7iv: Business Plus update

DP F&R provided an overview of the Business Plus report.

Due to the confidential nature of this item, it is subject to separate minute.

Q.A Member queried some of the lower attendance courses e.g., Sector Based Work academies and queried the feasibility/profit margin?

A. The Principal agreed if this required additional cost outside of the current teaching envelope we may consider differently however for the short-medium term this is an important/well profiled offer to be making available via the Job Centre Plus (JCP).

Members were informed a new ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) course has proved popular and noted good progress in new bids and tenders.

The Committee noted the report

25/22 Item 7v: IT Tender – taken at Item 07ii.

This item was discussed under Item 07iii as part of the annual capital budget. DPF&R provided an overview to this report circulated in advance that informed the Committee of an IT tender undertaken to move the College to a 'mobile based' delivery model. This aims to enable staff to have the ability to work securely from anywhere. A tender ran over the course of 4 weeks via the Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC) framework and closed on Tuesday 21 June.

The Committee noted the report

26/22 Item 8: People & Culture

The Head of People & Culture provided an overview of the termly report (circulated in advance) to the Committee.

Due to the confidential nature of this item, it is subject to separate minute.

Members were canvassed for their views on the addition of a suggested health 'cash plan.' Members were generally positive about this as an employee benefit. It was noted that the fact it had been included as part of a survey and then into fruition is a useful 'you said, we did.' Members did express their concern around the additional cost of such a service considering the conversations already taking place around deficit budget, as well as the possible impact of this as a taxable benefit to individuals.

HPC confirmed the cost equates to approximately £60 per staff members at the most basic level. It was noted in comparison to the previous Employee Assistance Programme (EPA) this was significantly more, however the possible impact was wider (and included access to an EPA as standard)

A member queried if the HPC feels that staff are fully aware of what the health 'cash plan' will offer them. Its important that staff are clear on the type of cover we are offering them and the potential cost of any 'extras'

this combined with the taxable benefit may mean staff are disappointed. Members went on to discuss various employees' schemes and noted that there can be significant differences between them. Some members expressed cynicism that access to the scheme at the most basic level would have any notable impact on the sickness absence/trends. Overall, it was agreed that the College needed to be careful with communications, so staff expectations are managed.

The Committee noted the report

27/22 Item 09: SAR/Annual review

The HG provided an overview to this report detailing the Governance SAR which includes assessing the Committee's performance against aspect of the Code of Good Governance (COGG) alongside a review of its Terms of Reference (TOR).

Suggestions of best practice and or improvements from the COGG review included;

- Review of the Sustainability Strategy in 2023 should involve stakeholders where possible.
- A sustainability Link Governor role and or Governor representation on the Sustainability Group.
- The College's Sustainability Action Plan/a general update report should be reviewed and or tracked at Committee level
- ESFA non-statutory reporting around Sustainability to begin March 2023.

The Committee agreed with the suggested best practice improvements. The Committee went on to review the TOR for the year spent and the year ahead and agreed they were fit for purpose.

The Committee approved the SAR best practice suggestions for improvement and the TOR for 2022-23

28/22 Item 10: Strategy & Policy

The Committee noted the significant number of policies included in the pack for approval. The Chair commended the inclusion of the cover sheets as a means to aid review. To this end the following policies were approved;

- **Sickness Absence policy**
- **Recruitment policy**
- **Redundancy policy**
- **Staff code of conduct**
- **Dignity at work policy**
- **Appraisal policy**
- **Maternity, paternity, and adoption policy**
- **Drug & substance misuse policy**
- **HE fees policy**
- **FE fees policy**

Staff code of conduct

A member suggested that we consider adding some detail into the Code of Conduct in reference to 'political' views in their widest sense. Views beyond what might typically be consider 'party' politics that stray into more 'social' politics and free speech/expression are becoming increasingly prevalent and require careful management. It was suggested a contact at the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) may be able to provide some advice/guidance on best practice.

ACTION: HPC to link in with Governor EHRC contact and amend code accordingly.

The Committee approved the above policies.

29/22 Any other Business and Date of next meeting

There were no further items of business, the first part of the meeting ended at 19.20.