

Minutes

FINANCE & RESOURCES PLANNING MEETING

Date:	17 March 2025	Time:	4 PM
Chairperson:	Trevor Gabriele	Location:	The Hart Room & Teams

Present	Name	Role
Membership	Trevor Gabriele (TG)	External Member & Chair
	Lee Probert (PCE)	Principal & Chief Executive
	Sally Osmond (SO)	External Member & Chair of Corporation
	Neil McDougall (NM)	External Member
	Debbie Ferguson (DF)	External Member
	Professor Gavin Brooks (GB)	External Member (Teams)
	Sue Richardson (SR)	Staff (Support) Member
	Julian Cooper (JC)	External Member
Apologies:	Peter Lambert (PL)	External Member & Vice Chair
In Attendance:	Heather Large (HL)	Governance Professional (GP)
	Jamie Morton (JM)	Director of Finance (DF)
	Lee Hunt (LH)	Vice Principal FE & Curriculum (VPFEC)
	Cathy Wright (CWr)	Vice Principal Central Services (VPCS)
	Jo Houghton (JH)	Vice Principal – HE & Skills (VPHES)
	Jatinder Matharu (JM)	Director of Safeguarding & Support (DSS)
	Nathan Hall (NH)	Director of Estates and Facilities (DEF)
Quorum:	Three Members required	Meeting quorate



Item No.		Reports
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE The Committee received and accepted apologies for absence for Peter Lambert.	Verbal
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of any pecuniary, conflict or business interests in any of the agenda items.	Verbal
3.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING The Committee approved the Finance and Resources Committee Minutes of 2 December 2024. The Committee approved the Confidential Finance and Resources Committee Minutes of 2 December 2024.	Paper – p3 Paper – p11

4.	<p>TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>The Committee reviewed and approved the Finance and Resources Terms of Reference but asked for three external members rather than two to form the membership.</p>	Paper – p13
	<p>Action: GP to amend Terms of Reference to reflect an increase from two external members to three for the constitution of the Committee.</p>	

5.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the Action Tracker.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that matters outstanding below be changed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PCE to obtain clearer guidance from the DfE on pension options. Closed. Pension options requiring a subsidiary are unlikely to be approved under Managing Public Money 2. VPCS to ask that external reviewers of the College website ask for Governor Opinion. Outstanding. 3. PCE/DF to show excess PFI costs “below the line” in future accounts. Complete. 4. VPCS/FD to ensure staff costs to be reviewed and included in the Finance five year plan and Budget. Outstanding. 5. VPCS/FD to ensure further granular data to be provided on the calculation of the staffing costs, year on year within the Finance five year plan and Budget. Outstanding. 6. VPCS to drive an updated Marketing strategy document date for delivery to be agreed. Complete. 7. DF to update Financial Regulations Policy in line with new College Financial Handbook and bring back to Committee. Completed at December Board Meeting. 8. Clerk to add dates to Actions 1-3 & 10-11 with Action 7 & 8 left open for the next meeting. Complete 9. DF to amend the wording “lost” on Appendix 1 to “deferred to the followin year”. Complete 10. To formulate a Working Group to focus on Staffing. Complete 11. At the next Finance and Resource Meeting under the agenda item of Staffing the Committee will recommend what they would like to be discussed and way forward. Complete 12. VPFEC to provide data around the need for permanent contracted English and Maths staff. Ongoing. 13. VPEC/FD to provide a costed curriculum that compares the budget assumptions to forecast for 24-25. To enable the Committee to understand how resources are being deployed and the level of contribution from each element of the colleges provision. Ongoing. 14. FD to provide details of current and potential cost savings and how they wil be achieved. Outstanding. 15. FD to make changes as determined by the F&R Committee to the Statutory Accounts before presenting to Board. Outstanding. 16. FD to consider if/how elements of the dashboard can be captured as part of the monthly management accounts. Outstanding. 17. SO to check accuracy of senior pay ranges. Closed. 18. VPCS to break down staffing information to highlight any specific issues for Foundation Learning. Ongoing. 	Paper – p23
6.	<p>Land Sale* (Mayfield Point)</p> <p>This is subject to a Confidential Minute</p>	Paper – p24

7.	<p>STAFFING STRATEGY</p> <p>The Committee were advised that a Staffing Working Party would be created to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay Framework Policy • Content of HR Reports and Cycle of Reports • People Strategy Policy • Terms of Reference for this Working Party • Members to be Lee Probert, Cathy Wright, Sally Osmond and Debbie Ferguson 	Verbal
8.	<p>STUDENT NUMBERS</p> <p>The Committee were informed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16-19 student number despite withdrawals has moved upwards from October meeting. • 19+ numbers are progressing well towards the forecasted figure. • Applications for 16-19 are on track and are progressing well toward the 1200 target. <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the College budget setting right based on good assumptions. VPFECC explained this year is more challenging, but the targets are separate to the budget. • Is there potential for flexibility of resources particularly for staff. VPFECC confirmed there is. • DfE had confirmed in year growth funding for this year which is less than the previous formula. The DF will update the forecast. • Are the in-year growth figures accurate. VPFECC explained it is. • College is up on prior year but down on budget, is that correct. VPFECC confirmed it is and College are 22 off budget for 16-19's. • What is the College view on the impact, PCE confirmed there is a £1.4m deficit without the full cost of PFI going into the budget, but including estate running cost assumption. • Could the College confirm that the finance received is for the 1078 and if the number is higher when and how those funds are made up VPFECC confirmed that was correct that 1100 was the budget target and College achieved 1076. 	Paper – p25
9.	<p>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS</p> <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would appear that indications are not supporting growth funding in the next academic year, if so are the projections being adjusted taking that into account? FD confirmed they are regularly reviewed and updated. • What has contributed to an increased ASF Budget. FD confirmed the College has increased its network this year and is looking to increase its internal work for ASF. • At the last F& R Committee meeting Committee were presented with a long list of areas where the budget was going up this year and told they would be seeing proposals for financial savings this year. Committee were not able to find any indications of savings in the immediate term in the papers. Are there any such proposals? FD confirmed they are and it is a work in progress. 	Paper – p26

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 32, at the bottom of the page it states that College still expect to receive £370K for the margin land final payment. As the meeting is on the 17th March, is that still the case? FD confirmed as far as he was aware this was still a possibility. Is the Apprenticeship funding sub-contracted. VPHES confirmed it is not. 	
10.	<p>FM SERVICE POST PFI</p> <p>The Committee were asked to approve the next stage of the proposal.</p> <p>The Committee asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where is the plan of what the service definition (user requirements) is for the services to outsourced. DEF explained that a working party has been created internally consisting of DEF, PCE, FD and VPCS to ascertain what external resource is needed and then go out for quotations. The College is in receipt of a quotation for support and is about to go out for a second quote all have experience of PFI. Could the College elaborate on what the support looks like. DEF explained that scope wise College have three choices, source it internally, source a sole external contractor or a mix of the two. College do not have the costs of these things, these entities will come up with the finances and suggestions of who College should go with. At what stage would College set its expectations. DEF confirmed it will be put into that second stage, Mitie generally set this, and College would need to change that process. Would the external people help with this. DEF confirmed they would advise College of the “normal”. First quote received has been for £10k. <p>Committee endorsed the approach but were keen to see the steps defined.</p>	Paper – p41
11.	<p>GENDER PAY GAP REPORT</p> <p>The Committee were informed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College Median is significantly higher than its benchmark group. The Mean % gap is close to the College benchmark. <p>The Committee felt this was an area for consideration by the Staffing Working Party. VPCS agreed.</p> <p>Committee recommended the Gender Pay Gap Report go to Board for approval.</p>	Paper – p51

12.	<p>HR REPORT</p> <p>The Committee were informed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing: Agency cost remains high, 95% of the current spend is covering vacancies. • Pay: Summary has been produced highlighting the pay bands for roles within the College and provided to the Remuneration Committee. The changes to the terms and conditions of term time only and sessional staff to meet holiday legislation guidelines has been completed. The pay review was positively received • Staff Engagement: Professional Reviews are being completed, at the time of reporting 40% had been completed, with another 25% in process. The remaining 35% are targeted for completion by the end of March 2025. • Employee Relations: There have been 5 redundancies and 2 terminations this academic year. 2 informal complaints have been 	Paper – p59
	<p>dealt with, and 4 performance improvement plans are currently in progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Retention: Foundation Learning continue to retain their staff, they currently have 7% labour turnover, compared to 12% for the college. This is the first time that labour turnover is tracking lower for foundation learning when compared to the whole college since College started recording 4 years ago. • Wellbeing: Four long term sick cases are being supported; College are halfway through the year and its absence is tracking lower than the previous 3 years. College are currently running at 2.6 days sick per employee compared to 3.4 days last year. <p>CPD: Mandatory Training completion is sitting at 97% at the time of writing this paper compared to 91% at the end of last year. 69% of the CPD budget has been spent so far this year and forecast to spend the full amount.</p> <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the College will spend the remaining £60k budget. VPCS confirmed it will be used for staff recruitment. • Appendix 1 Compliance figures show three areas at 100%, is this correct. VPCS confirmed it was. • Is the College high for staff sick days in comparison to the sector. VPCS confirmed it is fairly average but lower for the College than previously because of the improvement in sick days for Foundation Learning. 	

13.	<p>IT SERVICES</p> <p>The Committee were informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College achieving Essentials Plus accreditation. • The IT Department has taken on the responsibility of all devices that were previously managed by the Print Room, this includes, cameras, drones, laptops for hire and hearing aid devices. • The identification of IT champions has not progressed. Plan to implement in summer term • Document management training will be provided after Easter <p>The Committee questioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concern around the time it takes for complex Freedom of Information requests and asked for more detail. VPCS gave the Committee an overview on the complexities. • Detail around the small platforms. VPCS explained they are web based data rather than programmes to the infrastructure. 	Paper – page 70
14.	<p>MARKETING STRATEGY</p> <p>The Committee were informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications and enquiries, which are a core measurement of marketing impact and effectiveness, continue to grow year on year. • The Market Research Coordinator has utilised the new software in the research analysis for the curriculum planning process. • The update to our website is ongoing, feedback will be gathered by the Market Research Co-Ordinator by Easter 2025. <p>The Committee questioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why the success of marketing applications to enrolments is not measured and if that is part of the strategy. VPCS explained their 	Paper – page 80
	<p>influence stops at that point. Committee proposed this metric should be measured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where does it happen and where is it recorded. VPCS explained on a platform called Sharp Spring • How does the College propose to cover the Entry Level 7 offer along with all the other priorities with fewer students coming in. VPCS agreed and is working through the budget on what needs attention and where value for money takes a priority for the whole College and UCN. <p>.</p> <p>Action: FD/VPCS to put a section in the budget paper on Marketing.</p>	

15.	<p>POLICIES</p> <p>The Committee were asked to ratify for Board approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity – Ratify pending corrections (see below) • Sickness Absence and Sickness Pay - Ratify • Maternity and Family Leave - Ratify • Flexible Working - Ratify <p>The Committee questioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Business Continuity Policy, it says it is biannual review then says that the next review is due March 2026. On page 5 the reviewed date and next review date have not been filled in. 	Appendix 1
16.	<p>INSPECTION READY</p> <p>The Committee noted this is an ongoing piece of work, and the College should make sure any notifiable issues be in compliance.</p>	Verbal
17.	<p>AI WITHIN F&R COMMITTEE</p> <p>The College are running an AI course next year and are currently seeking feedback from staff what they would like included.</p>	Verbal
18.	<p>EXTERNAL MEMBERS ONLY*</p> <p>Staff Members & SLT left. PCE remained.</p> <p>It is to be noted that Professor Gavin Brooks left at 18.05 hours</p> <p>Subject to a Confidential Minute</p> <p>Date of next Meeting Monday 7 July 2025 at 4pm in The Hart Room</p> <p>Meeting Closed at 18:20 hours</p>	

*Confidential items

Signed Trevor (Chair) Date: 17th October 20 Oct 2025
: Gabriele 2025

Trevor Gabriele (Oct 20, 2025, 11:51am)



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