

**BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 29 March 2021 via Zoom

<b>Present</b>	Matt Roach Heather Ancient David Allen Stewart Noakes Emma Webber Glenn Woodcock John Laramy Carol McCormack	Chair Vice Chair
<b>Apologies</b>	Mike Owen	Co-opted
<b>Observers</b>	None	
<b>In Attendance</b>	Rob Bosworth Richard Church <i>From item 6</i> Kate Barczok <i>Item 7 only</i> Steve Strang <i>Item 5.1 only</i> Katy Gaulton <i>Item 5.1 only</i> Dawn Barnard <i>Item 5.2 only</i> Mike Blakeley	Deputy Principal/CEO Chief Financial Officer College Accountant Director of Estates and IT Head of Marketing Events Officer Director of Apprenticeships
	Alison Layton-Hill	Clerk to the Corporation

1. **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**  
The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting. Apologies were retrospectively received from Mike Owen. There were no declarations of interest received.
2. **Minutes**
  - 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020, as circulated, were agreed.
  - 2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020, as circulated, were agreed.
3. **Matters arising**
  - 3.1 There were no matters arising that were not part of the main agenda.
4. **Risk Management**
  - 4.1 Risk Register

The Risk Register that had been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 15 March 2021 was received. The Chief Financial Officer highlighted the high-risk areas and those that had been recategorised.

The Committee was reassured that the current risk register reflected the latest position in terms of the nursery. The pandemic had been very challenging for the nursery and the College is now modelling for the future and considering occupancy rates and fees.

The Committee discussed the level of capacity and resilience available to react to a potentially unknown major systemic risk, following a long difficult period of operating in a pandemic. It was agreed that it is essential to make sure that the College has the agility to react and create processes to manage potential risks. It was also raised that the College should consider what actions would be required in the event of a risk materialising, as well as putting in mitigations to reduce the likelihood.

Governors questioned the number of risks that are presented to the Board and the level at which those risks should be of concern. It was suggested that thought be given to how risks are retired to avoid the risk register becoming overly complex.

**RC**

It was noted that there are two new co-opted members on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee who will bring new ideas to inform the risk register.

### **The Committee noted the report**

*Katy Gaulton, Head of Marketing and Dawn Barnard, Events Officer joined the meeting*

## **5. Strategic Matters**

### **5.1 Marketing update**

The Committee welcomed the new Head of Marketing and received the presentation which outlined the department's work over the past year, as well as the direction of travel for the coming year.

The Committee questioned whether there had been any learning from how the team had operated over the last year and whether it would be of benefit to continue with any of the newly acquired strategies. The Committee noted that the online open events had been successful and there may be elements of those that will continue as the use of digital marketing increases.

The Committee also acknowledged how successful the online graduation and award ceremonies had been to allow for student celebration.

The Committee raised the importance of considering competitor analysis and thinking about the programmes that will need to be delivered into the future such as robotics, AI and adapting to climate change. The Head of Marketing explained the analytical approach she intends to use to gather marketing intelligence and identify market share to inform campaigns and strategy.

There was a discussion about the challenge of understanding what skills will be required over the next 20 years on an employer level. It was noted that with rapid change, employers are unclear of what their needs might be and it was questioned what actions the College can take to unlock the issue. The Principal/CEO explained that a new Growth and Prosperity (GAP) group had been formed, chaired by the Deputy Principal/CEO, which will be identifying opportunities and how the College might position itself for the future. Governors will also be invited to participate in the GAP group to facilitate connecting intelligence. The Deputy Principal/CEO also referred to the Exeter Growth and Skills group which the College is actively part of and involves major local employers.

**The Committee noted the report and thanked the Head of Marketing and the Events Officer for their informative presentation**

*Mike Blakeley, Director of Apprenticeships joined the meeting*

## 5.2 **Employer Engagement and Apprenticeship update**

The Committee received the report and presentation. It was evident that the national apprenticeship scene is turbulent, however the College has maintained a positive position and is currently 14% ahead of the budget profile. The team are working well to support learners.

The Committee questioned the risk of out of funded learners and received assurance that these learners are the highest priority, are reviewed weekly with faculties and each learner has a clear action plan.

Governors expressed concern that some learners had had no contact for 45 days. The Committee noted that it is a requirement for apprentices to be visited every 12 weeks, however the College sets itself a target of 70 days and an additional early warning target of 45 days. There would be concern if similar numbers were recorded at the 70 day mark. The Committee also noted that the College compares favourably with national data.

The Committee questioned how quickly the situation would return to previous levels following the easing of restrictions. The Director of Apprenticeships hoped that within six months, the apprenticeship position will revert to at least where it was before the pandemic.

**The Committee noted the report**

- 5.3 Opportunities and Developments Risk Register  
Item 5.3 was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

*Kate Barczok, College Accountant joined the meeting*

6. **Finance Matters**

- 6.1 Management Accounts (January 2021)  
The Management Accounts for January 2021 were received.  
This item was further dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.
- 6.2 Subsidiary – Exeter College Services Ltd  
Item 6.2 was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.
- 6.3 Strategic Financial Objectives  
The Chief Financial Officer explained the strategic financial objectives and that they would be used to inform budget setting.  
This item was further dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes
- 6.4 College's Reserves, Borrowings and Capital Developments  
Item 6.4 was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.
- 6.4.1 Treasury Management policy  
The Committee received the revised Treasury Management policy.

**The Committee approved the Treasury Management policy**

*Steve Strang, Director of Estates and IT joined the meeting*

7. **Property Matters**

- 7.1 Estates Masterplan  
7.2 Property Update  
Items 7.1 and 7.2 were dealt with as confidential items in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

8. **Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement**

The Committee received the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement and noted the minor amendments.

**The Committee approved the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the Principal/CEO's signature.**

9. **Emerging Risks**

The Committee considered additional risks that had emerged from the discussion and it was agreed there was nothing further to add to the risk register.

10 **Future Meetings**

10.1 Items to take to the Board were agreed as:

- Marketing update
- Employer engagement and apprenticeship update
- Exeter College Services Ltd – letter of support
- Strategic Financial objectives, pending additional work
- Santander loan security
- Lloyds loan extension
- Treasury Management policy
- FECA funded WiFi and Infrastructure project
- Summer works programme
- Anti-slavery and human trafficking statement

**Clerk**

10.2 Items for the next meeting

The Committee reviewed the cycle of business for the 21 June 2021 meeting and agreed the items to be included on the agenda.

**Clerk**

10.3 Meeting dates:

- Monday 21 June 2021
- Monday 20 September 2021
- Monday 22 November 2021

11 Minutes/reports for information

11.1 Student Recruitment

11.2 Safety Health and Environment Minutes

11.3 FE Commissioner's letter February 2021

11.4 FE Benchmark Definitions February 2021