

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 25 September 2023 at 5.30pm remotely via Zoom

Present	Patrick Tigwell	Chair
<i>To item 9</i>	Carol McCormack	Vice Chair
	John Laramy	Principal/CEO
	Graham Atkins	
	Stewart Noakes	
	Cynthia Sedgman	
	Sally Wolkowski	
Apologies	Glenn Woodcock	
In Attendance	Rob Bosworth	Deputy Principal/CEO
	John Dowell	Executive Director of Finance
<i>Item 7.3 only</i>	Kate Barczok	College Accountant
<i>Item 8 only</i>	Steve Strang	Executive Director of Estates and IT
<i>Item 4 only</i>	Gemma Noble	Executive Director of People and Organisational Development
	Alison Layton-Hill	Head of Governance

1. **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**
 The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting and extended a particular welcome to new governors.

 Apologies were received from Glenn Woodcock and there were no declarations of interest received.
2. **Minutes**
 - 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023 as circulated, were agreed.
 - 2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023, as circulated, were agreed.
3. **Matters Arising**
 - 3.1 Committee self-evaluation update
 The Committee reviewed the narrative prepared by the Head of Governance following the self-assessment discussion at the previous meeting.

The Committee agreed the self-assessment

Gemma Noble, Executive Director of People and Organisational Development joined the meeting

4. **Policies**

4.1 LGPS Pension Discretions Statement

The Committee received the LGPS Pension Discretions Statement and considered the amendments.

The Committee agreed to adopt the LGPS Pension Discretions Statement

4.2 Teaching and Learning Excellence Guidelines

The Committee received the Teaching and Learning Excellence Guidelines and considered the amendments. The Committee sought reassurance that the number of teaching hours was not being amended. It was confirmed that this was not the case and consultation with the unions had raised no concerns.

The Committee agreed to adopt the Teaching and Learning Excellence Guidelines

Gemma Noble left the meeting

5. **Risk Management**

5.1 Risk Register

The Risk Register was received by the Committee and the Executive Director of Finance highlighted the changes to the risk areas related to the Business Services Committee.

The Committee noted that the summary of changes and the profile of risks had been elevated to the start of the document.

The Committee noted the risk register

6. **Strategic Matters**

6.1 Opportunities and Developments Risk Register

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

7. **Financial Matters**

7.1 Staff Pay Award

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

7.2 Exeter College Services Ltd

This item 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

7.3 Financial Regulations

- Financial Regulations 2023
- Financial Regulations Appendices 2023
- Financial Procedures 2023
- Treasury Management Policy
- Capital Expenditure Standard Operating Procedure

The College Accountant highlighted the amendments to the Financial Regulations. The Committee noted the team structure changes and the impact on the financial regulations relating to reclassification and in particular meeting the requirements of Managing Public Money.

Governors raised that the Financial Regulations relate to short term financial control and questioned where the roles, responsibilities and processes for longer term financial management were set out. It was explained that the Financial Regulations and Procedures mainly focus on transactions and processing as opposed to longer term strategy. The Executive Director of Finance committed to providing additional information to the following meeting.

Referring to the new Appendix J and its significant impact, the committee requested assurance that the content had been cascaded throughout the College. It was confirmed that the College Accountant and Executive Director of Finance would be undertaking that task.

JD/KB

The Committee:

- a) Agreed to recommend the Financial Regulations 2023, Financial Regulations Appendices 2023 and Financial Procedures 2023 to the Board for approval on 13 October 2023.**
- b) Agreed to adopt the Treasury Management policy**
- c) Approved the Capital Expenditure Standard Operating Procedure**
- d) Agreed to receive information related to roles, responsibilities and processes for longer term strategic financial management to the meeting on 27 November 2023**

JD

Kate Barczok left the meeting

7.4 Student Recruitment

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

Steve Strang, Executive Director of Estates and ICT joined the meeting.

8. **Property Matters**

8.1 Sustainability Update

The Committee noted that it would usually receive the sustainability annual report at this meeting, however there had been changes to how sustainability and net zero would operate within the College, with the aim of giving it a higher profile, and a report would come to a future meeting.

A new working group had been formed which will be chaired by the Executive Director of Estates and IT. Stewart Noakes was thanked for taking the role of lead governor for sustainability and net zero and for serving on the working group. The Committee noted that there would be wider involvement from staff and the student body. The new AoC guidance was considered a useful tool and the sustainability policy will be updated alongside the masterplan.

The Committee noted the report and agreed to receive a presentation at the Committee meeting on 27 November 2023

8.2 ICT Annual Report

The Committee received the report and the Deputy CEO and Executive Director of Estates and IT highlighted the key themes.

The Committee was reminded that a significant investment had been made in IT during the 2022/2023 academic year and received an overview of work that had been completed. Governors noted that the IT budget had returned to its usual level for the current year.

Governors challenged how frequently the College is commissioning an independent external audit related to security testing. The Committee noted that the works that had been undertaken were as a direct result of an external audit which provided an expert deep dive into the College network and infrastructure. The College intends to engage external support on a regular basis and the Committee suggested an annual review.

The Committee thanked Steve Strang and his team for their hard work and effort.

The Committee noted the report

8.3 Estates Masterplan

Items 8.3 was dealt with as confidential items in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

8.4 Property Update/Summer Works

The Committee received the report and was impressed with the level of maintenance and improvement work undertaken over the summer break.

It was pleasing to note that staff and students were complimentary of the areas and facilities that had been improved.

The Committee thanked Steve and in particular Alan Reed who had been fundamental in the successful delivery of the summer works.

The Committee noted the report

9. **Emerging Risks**

The Committee considered whether any additional risks had emerged during the meeting and concluded that there was nothing further to add to the risk register.

10. **Future Meetings**

10.1 Items to take to the Board meeting on 13 October 2023 were agreed as:

- Exeter College Services Ltd
- Pay Award (earlier by written resolution)
- Proposals within the Opportunities and Developments report
- Financial Regulations
- Masterplan Update

10.2 Items for the next meeting

The Committee reviewed and agreed the cycle of business for the next meeting.

10.3 Date of meetings for 2023/2024:

- Monday 27 November 2023
- Monday 18 March 2024
- Monday 17 June 2024

11 **Reports and Minutes for Information**

11.1 Funding letter from the Secretary of State

The Committee was pleased to note the positive progress the College was enjoying and extended its congratulations to the Executive team.

Signed by the Chair: 

Date: 27th November 2023