

BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 10 March 2025 at 5.30pm in the SLT Meetings Room, Hele Road, Exeter

Present	Patrick Tigwell Carol McCormack John Laramy Graham Atkins Sally Wolkowski	Chair Vice Chair Principal/CEO
Apologies	Stewart Noakes Cynthia Sedgman Stephen Wiltshire	
Observers	None	
In Attendance	Richard Church John Dowell <i>Items 6 and 7</i> Steve Strang <i>Item 4 only</i> Katy Gaulton Alison Layton-Hill	Chief Operating Officer Executive Director of Finance Executive Director of Estates and Sustainability Marketing Manager Head of Governance

Action

1. **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**
The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting. Apologies were received from Stewart Noakes, Cythia Sedgman and Stephen Wiltshire. As a Director of Exeter College Services Ltd, John Laramy expressed an interest in item 8.3.
2. **Minutes**
 - 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024, as circulated, were agreed.
 - 2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024, as circulated, were agreed.
3. **Matters arising**
There were no matters arising.

Katy Gaulton joined the meeting
4. **Marketing Strategy**
The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Marketing covering campaigns, awards, engagement on social media and events.

Recruitment had been positive for the 2025/2026 academic year and the 'apply now' campaign would be slowed from April/May.

The Committee enquired how the future of marketing would be linked to the strategic plan. It was confirmed that metrics of achievement would be linked to the strategic plan to evidence success. Following advertising campaigns, the number of applications received is monitored.

Governors asked whether the Board should be more visible. The marketing team welcome the opinion of governors and events are well supported by Board attendees.

The Marketing team structure was explained and it was agreed that external consultants may be used for specific larger projects or collaborations.

The Committee noted the assurance provided by the presentation

5. Risk Management

5.1 Risk Register

The Risk Register that had been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 24 February 2025 was received. The Executive Director of Finance highlighted the changes, and it was noted that no risks scores had increased.

The Committee was updated about planned rail engineering works which may impact learners. Assurance had been received related to replacement capacity and improved reliability will bring long term benefits. GWR had received approval and funding for additional rolling stock to service rural routes which will have a positive impact during the 2025/2026 year.

The Committee challenged the risk related to unfunded national insurance increases. It was confirmed that funding will be received however clarity to what extent was still awaited.

There was a discussion related to the usefulness of the risk register and the relationship between the risk register and the new strategic plan. The Committee noted that the assurance map cross references risks to activities and the current risk register will continue to evolve ie. risks will be removed if they are not a focus for the College.

The Committee noted the risk register

Steve Strang joined the meeting

6. **Strategic Matters**

6.1 Opportunities and Developments Risk Register

Item 6.1 was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes.

7. **Property Matters**

7.1 Health, Safety and Sustainability Annual Report

The Committee received the 2023/2024 annual report and the highlights were explained. The Committee was assured that near misses are reported and emerging patterns are analysed.

The Committee noted the assurance provided by the report

7.2 Estates Masterplan

Item 7.2 was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes.

7.3 Property Update

Item 7.3 was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes

Steve Strang left the meeting

8. **Finance Matters**

8.1 Management Accounts January 2025

The Management Accounts for January 2025 were received and the Committee noted that at this early stage there was no cause for concern and the dashboard appeared positive. In year funding is expected which will further improve the position.

The Committee noted the report

8.2 Five year Strategic Financial Plan including

- reserves, borrowings and capital development
- strategic financial objectives

Item 8.2 was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes.

8.3 Exeter College Services Ltd (ECSL) update

The Committee received the oral update and noted that the nursery transfer was complete. ECSL was on course to clear the remaining deficit.

The Committee noted the assurance provided by the update

9. **Anti-slavery and human trafficking statement**

The Committee received the updated statement and noted the minor amendments. In response to question it was confirmed that the Estates department monitors sub-contractors.

The Committee agreed to recommend the anti-slavery and human trafficking statement to the Board for approval

10 **Emerging Risks**

The Committee did not consider there to be any additional risks that had emerged from discussion at the meeting.

11. **Future Meetings**

11.1 Items to take to the Board

- Masterplan update
- Strategic Financial Objectives
- Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking statement

11.2 Items for the next meeting

The Committee reviewed the cycle of business for the 16 June 2025 meeting and agreed the items to be included on the agenda.

11.3 Dates meetings for 2024/2025

- Monday 16 June 2025

12. **Minutes/reports for information**

12.1 Health and Safety Minutes

12.2 Sustainability and Net Zero Minutes

12.3 Student Recruitment