



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Monday 22 November 2021**

**Present: -** Mervyn Jones (Chair)  
Abigail Appleton (Principal)  
Professor Robin Baker OBE  
Clive Hodgeman  
Scott Rolfe

**In attendance: -** Tim Williams (Finance Director)  
Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)

The meeting was quorate as there were five Members present. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Peta Darnley.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Governors agreed that the Chair should sign the confidential minutes of the last meeting held on 27 September 2021 as a true record subject to an amendment which was recorded.

**Matters arising from the Minutes**

- I. The Principal reported that a competitor's internal progression was 25%; HCA's target is 15%.
- II. The Finance Director would ascertain if the College would have owner rights of the estates strategy commissioned to consultants. **ACTION: FINANCE DIRECTOR**
- III. The Finance Director explained that any HE numbers reported in September would be unconfirmed as ahead of enrolment. It was agreed a meeting should go ahead in September to provide interim updates to the Committee to identify any issues before the November meeting.

**The Committee agreed: -**

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

**4. Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2021**

The Finance Director presented the draft financial statements which would be reviewed by the Audit Committee before being

recommended to the Board for approval. Mazars have also prepared an audit completion report to the Audit Committee which will provide the substantial part of the evidence required by the Audit Committee to enable their recommendation to the Board. Mazars completion report had identified one low-level risk relating to four staff contracts which had not been signed when the member of staff commenced employment. There were no changes to financial data.

A Governor asked for an explanation of the revaluation reserve write off deduction of £17,660 in the reconciliation between the audited financial statements and management accountants. The Finance Director explained that this related to the revaluation reserve and the amortisation of that reserve. The revaluation reserve was related to the freehold assets transferred to the College at incorporation in 1993 for a zero cash value. These assets were valued by a surveyor and included on the balance sheet as a fixed asset. The opposite side of this entry was in the revaluation reserve. If it had been purchased for cash, the opposite side would have been a credit to cash.

The reason the pension increase was less than the salary increase for the actuarial assumptions for the LGPS was questioned. It was understood that this was based on inflation at 4.1%; this would be clarified with Mazars. **ACTION: FINANCE DIRECTOR**

The Chair of Corporation and Chair of Audit Committee will have a conversation with Mazars' partner following the Audit Committee which will be led by the Chair of the Audit Committee to satisfy the requirements of the revised ACOP.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the draft financial statements

5. **Strategic Implementation Progress Report** [a confidential minute was recorded]

6. **Finance Report**

The ESFA financial return benchmarking and dashboard reported ESFA's assessment of the College's financial health. This was calculated converting a range of financial indicators into a point score using three ratios which was converted to a grade. Using this calculation the College's moderated financial health was assessed as 'outstanding' in the year to 31 July 2021.

Management Accounts to 30 September 2021 had been issued before the previous Board meeting and were noted.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the ESFA financial return benchmarking and dashboard
- To note the management accounts to 30 September 2021

7. **Premises and Accommodation Report** [a confidential minute was recorded]

8. **Annual Reports**

- I. The Treasury Management Report 2020/21 summarised cash balances, which were strong, and banking arrangements noting that no interest income had been generated. The College has no loans or overdraft facility.
- II. The Health and Safety Report 2020/21 was noted with confirmation that the Health and Safety Designated Governor is invited to meetings. There was discussion about near misses which appeared low which may not always be reported. Staff training is being provided explaining the importance of reporting near misses. Areas for development included the quality of risk assessments and near miss reporting. Fire safety audits are completed by Course Leaders in each area using a checklist. An external consultant completed the fire risk assessment. Internal auditors audited health and safety last year with no major issues identified. A Governor suggested including a separate report from CityHeart on issues at Station Approach which was agreed. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**
- III. The Personnel Report 2020/21 was a comprehensive report. Governors were encouraged by the low staff turnover and staff training; however, further information about staff development was requested. A summary of the headcount and gender pay gaps would be presented to the Board. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**

A Governor asked if the department should be HR as opposed to personnel which was fully supported.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the annual reports which would be issued to the Board for information
- The Board would have discussion on the College's people strategy including staff development in February **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**

9. **Policies**

The Principal confirmed that these are statutory policies following practice in the sector. The Family Friendly Policy had some additional points which were above statutory requirements. A Governor asked if maternity leave should be paternity or partner leave to encompass single sex partnerships. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the Family Friendly Policy, Special Leave Policy and Staff Development Policy with a revision to the Family Friendly Policy to state that this meets statutory requirements and that the College is going above and beyond these in some areas

**10. Any other business**

There were no items.

**11. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting was arranged for Monday 21 March 2022 commencing at 5.00 pm.

**Signed as a true record**

**Chair** ..... **Date** .....