



## Business Committee Minutes

Meeting	Business Committee	Date	16 March 2023
Location	Folkestone – Executive Boardroom	Time	9.30am
Membership	Charles Buchanan, Miranda Chapman, Gail Clarke (Chair), Paula Gillespie, Graham Razey (CEO), Karen Wilks (Staff Governor), Joanna Worby		
In Attendance	Chris Legg, (CL) Chief Financial Officer Dan Shelley (DS), Chief Transformation Officer Sharon Hollingsworth, (SH) Director of Governance Fiona Medeiros (FM), Senior Executive Support Officer - Minutes Clerk Alison Gray for items 9 & 10		

	ITEM	COMMENTS	ACTION
1	Welcome and apologies for absence	Gail Clarke, Dan Shelley and Karen Wilks joined by Teams. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	Declarations of Interest	There were no additional declarations to the meeting other than those declared as standing.	
3	Minutes of the meetings held on 24 <sup>th</sup> November 2022 including confidential minutes	The minutes and confidential minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 24 November 2022 were reviewed by Committee members and approved as a true and fair account by members present.  The minutes will be e-signed following the meeting by the Chair.	
4	Matters Arising not covered by this agenda: Item 12: Update on Gender Pay Gap position	The Chair invited questions from the Committee, the following points were discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff turnover is 19.1%, with greatest turnover in business service roles.</li> <li>• The issue is most acute amongst staff with less than 2 years' experience.</li> <li>• Training is not considered an issue, it is very available.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progression, reward and recognition noted as an issue for staff working at a higher level. Committee members concurred that other organisations face similar concerns.</li> <li>Pay awards can only be funded through efficiencies and this debate is currently underway with union representatives.</li> </ul> <p>NOTED – Interim gender pay gap update.</p>	
Strategic items			
5	ONS reclassification impact on borrowings and cash flow	<p>CL discussed impact as reported in paper, noting that commercial borrowing is no longer permissible following ONS reclassification; the educational loan programme remains to be clarified. The potential impact on self-determination and capital projects were noted.</p> <p>NOTED - ONS reclassification impact on borrowings and cash flow</p>	
6	Quote to upgrade VR Classrooms within SDF2 project	<p>DS answered questions on his paper, clarifying that the sum requested, £167,508 is the total needed to upgrade the four rooms to VR immersive.</p> <p>AGREED – Committee approved spend, CEO to sign documentation.</p>	CEO
7	<p>Capital Programme Update Appendix: 1-page updates for each live project</p> <p>Property Sub-Committee minutes 07.03.23</p>	<p>DS presented the update, noting the projects due to be completed in time for 2023/24 Academic Year (Dover, Spring Lane and Ashford) are on track, both to time and budget.</p> <p>See Confidential Minutes for additional comments.</p> <p>NOTED – both Capital Programme Updates and Property Sub-Committee minutes.</p>	
Reporting			

8	January 2023 Management Accounts to include Q2 re-forecast	<p>CL presented the Management accounts highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shortfall in adult education budget funding. The Chair noted that this is frequently the case asking if the shortfall can be addressed during the year. CL countered that we were close to budgeted figures in 2019, however post-covid shows slow recovery. The Group are optimistic about realising forecasted figures following changes to EKC Training and centres. CL to include a risk analysis in the next budget to reflect concerns.</li> </ul> <p>(Paula Gillespie left the meeting.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refectories are seeing a resurgence in market share.</li> <li>• Under-recruitment and holding of vacancies results in pay savings however this is causing a strain in some areas.</li> <li>• Within commercial income, lettings remain static and the Group would benefit from a strategic drive around this.</li> <li>• The Yarrow are forecasting surplus.</li> </ul> <p>NOTED – January 2023 Management Accounts, including Q2 re-forecast.</p>	CL
9	Grievance Policy Procedure Appendix: Staff Grievance Procedure	<p>AG joined the meeting to discuss updates to the Grievance Policy procedure, for approval by the Committee. The following further edits were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change to the wording of paragraph 2.14. <i>Any recommendations that arise from a grievance investigation will be considered for implementation.</i></li> <li>• Note that meetings will be recorded however individuals are not allowed to record.</li> </ul> <p>AG confirmed that employees can see the evidence before the meeting however there are circumstances where details are redacted.</p> <p>AG confirmed that there have been 10 grievance cases this academic year. Mediation training is in place to address instances before they reach the grievance stage and support</p>	

		<p>for improvement is offered with training and development available. Leads are promoting 1:1 meetings, ensuring managers are aware of their accountabilities.</p> <p><b>AGREED – Updates to Grievance Policy, noting further changes as listed above.</b></p>	AG
10	Update on performance against Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy	<p>AG answered questions from the Committee regarding the report. Six RIDDOR reportable accidents have been registered this academic year, an increase on previous years however root cause analysis shows that the accidents are not as a result of any one risk. It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inspection schedule is going well with college cross inspections underway.</li> <li>• A consolidated approach is now taken to risk analysis.</li> <li>• Fire assessments are reviewed annually.</li> <li>• Ofsted inspectors did not raise any Health and Safety concerns.</li> <li>• Structures differ at other Kent colleges, noting outsourcing in some instances.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTED – Update on performance against Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.</b></p> <p>(AG left the meeting.)</p>	
11	Report on HR Matters	<p>The CEO provided a verbal update on HR matters. Staff absence is markedly down making workloads more manageable, but there is still work to do on bringing it down to historic levels.</p> <p>There have been 12 disciplinary cases since start of academic year, resulting in three dismissals and four final written warnings. All dismissals were appealed.</p> <p>There have also been 11 staff grievances. Three of these have been partially upheld.</p> <p>There is currently one case with ACAS, two tribunals are pending and we have two personal injury cases.</p> <p>Staff vacancies were not seen by Ofsted to be an issue as they were not impacting upon the</p>	



		student experience.  NOTED – Report on HR Matters.	
Procedural			
12	Any Other Business	There was no other business.	
13	Matters Considered Confidential	Margate Digital discussion.	
14	Date and time of next meeting	Date and time of next meeting: Thursday, 22 June 2023 at 9.30am	

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.30am.

Signed: *Grail*

Print: *Grail Clarke*

Date: *22-06-23*