

Board of Management

Meeting of the Finance & Physical Resources Committee

MINUTE OF 3rd MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3 MARCH 2021 AT 1500 HRS (FPRC3)

| Present | |
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| Nicolas Garcia (NG) | Stuart Patrick (SP) |
| Karen Kelly (KK) (Convener) | Ronnie Quinn (RQ) |
| Paul Little (PL) | Lesley Woolfries (LW) |
| In attendance | |
| Barry Ashcroft (BA) | Sheila Lodge (SL) |
| Paul Clark (PC) | Alex Stewart (AS) |
| John Gribben (JFG) (Item 4.4 only) | Stuart Thompson (ST) |
| Chris Keenan (CK) (Item 4.4 only) | Ann Butcher (Minute) |
| Apologies for absence | |
| None | |

| Item FPRC3-1 | Apologies for Absence | |
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| Paper No: | Lead: K Kelly | Action requested: Note |
| Decision/Noted | There were no apologies. SS was not in attendance. | |

| Item FPRC3-2 | Declarations of Interest | |
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| Paper No: | Lead: K Kelly | Action requested: Note |
| Decision/Noted | There were no declarations of interest. | |

| Item FPRC3-3.1 | Minute of Previous Meeting held on 2 December 2020 | |
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| Paper No: FPRC3-A | Lead: K Kelly | Action requested: Approve |
| Decision/No4ed | That the minute was approved subject to one minor amendment. | |

| Item FPRC3-3.2 | Committee Terms of Reference | |
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| Paper No: FPRC3-B | Lead: P Clark | Action requested: Approve |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | The Committee Terms of Reference were submitted for review. There were no recommended changes. | |
| Decision/Noted | To endorse the Terms of Reference without amendment for approval by the full Board. | |

| Item FPRC3-3.3 | Strategic Risk Review | |
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| Paper No: FPRC3-C | Lead: P Clark | Action requested: Discuss |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>The risks currently related to the Committee's areas of responsibility were submitted for review.</p> <p>PC drew particular attention to Risk 12 which relates to Business Continuity Planning and informed the Committee that the Business Continuity Plan has been revised to reflect Covid-19 protocols. The Risk Score remains at 12 (AMBER).</p> <p>Members noted that the AAC has agreed that the overall Risk Score for Risk 24 '<i>Failure of Compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</i>' be reduced to 12 (AMBER). Due to paper distribution timings, i.e. prior to the Audit and Assurance Committee meeting, FPRC3-C had not yet been updated.</p> <p>ST added that the Risk MAPs will also be updated in line with the Financial Planning papers submitted at this meeting.</p> | |
| Decision/Noted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the review the Risk updates subject to revised Score for Risk 24. • To note the Risk Register dated 23 February 2021. | |

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| Item FPRC3-3.4 | | |
| Fee Waiver Policy | | |
| Paper No: FPRC3-D | Lead: S Thompson | Action requested: Approve |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>The revised Fee Waiver Policy which has been developed in accordance with the SFC Fee Waiver Grant Policy, and the condensed student friendly version were submitted for review and approval.</p> <p>The revised Fee Waiver Policy was agreed however it was suggested that the student version be referred to as a Fee Waiver guidance note. This was also agreed.</p> | |
| Decision/Noted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the Fee Waiver Policy. • To adapt the student version to a Fee Waiver guidance note. | |

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| Item FPRC3-3.5 | | |
| College Student Accommodation Charges 2021-22 | | |
| Paper No: FPRC3-E | Lead: S Thompson | Action requested: Approve |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>ST reported that the Covid-19 pandemic has negatively impacted on the operation and income received from both St Luke's and Riverside accommodations. To ensure the College remains competitive, similar city centre accommodation rental costs have been assessed and the proposed price increases remain under 2%. The price increases continue to provide value for money and should not have a significant impact on students.</p> <p>Given the ongoing requirement to maintain a high quality clean and safe environment for students, the proposed modest increase was not considered excessive however it was suggested that any increase may have a negative impact on the reputation of the College. A clear PR announcement will be put in place should this situation arise.</p> | |

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| Decision/Noted | To approve the proposed Accommodation Charges for 2021-22. |
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| Item FPRC3-3.6 | New Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) | |
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| Paper No: FPRC3-N | Lead: S Thompson | Action requested: Approve |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>ST informed members of the ELT recommendation to initiate an APUC and College procurement process for a new Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which will replace Moodle and identified components of MyCity. The proposed project will see the new VLE rolled out for all learners at the start of session 2021-22.</p> <p>The business case and options appraisal papers were reviewed by the Committee and the proposal to submit an application to the College Foundation for new project funding for £600k was approved. The additional College contribution of £145k was also agreed. Further financial information on upkeep, maintenance and training will be provided at a future meeting.</p> <p>Additional decision gates will be included following the outcome of the Foundation Application and Tender process stages. Should the Foundation Application be unsuccessful, the viability of the project will be further assessed.</p> | |
| Decision/Noted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the proposal to submit funding application for a new VLE to the College Foundation, subject to inclusion of agreed decision gates. • To submit the paper for noting at the next meeting of the Board. | |

| Item FPRC3-4.1 | Financial Scenario – 5 Year Plan | |
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| Paper No: FPRC3-F | Lead: S Thompson | Action requested: Discuss |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>ST provided a brief overview of the 5 year forecast financial plan for the period 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2025. The Plan provides ELT/SMT with early indication of the potential financial impact a small variance of 1% over a 4 year period can make to the College's long term financial viability. The massive financial challenges over the next few years to recover from the current projected financial loss was recognised.</p> | |
| Decision/Noted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note the Financial Scenario – 5 Year Plan. • To submit the Plan for twice yearly review (May and November). | |

| Item FPRC3-4.2 | Financial Plan 2020-21 Update | |
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| Paper No: FPRC3-G | Lead: S Thompson | Action requested: Discuss |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>ST advised that the current projected financial performance to 31 July 2021 shows a reduced deficit of £1.2m. Whilst the increase in projected fee income reflects enrolments and courses being successfully taught online, this will be offset by a reduction in catering, accommodation and, EU & International income. An element of increased staff costs is also anticipated, to maximise student completion of practical elements this session. The Committee also noted that the SFC has announced</p> | |

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| | <p>additional funding for Young Persons Guarantee and National Transition Training Fund across the sector.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that Foundation applications for the Blended Learning Fund and Adobe licences have both been approved.</p> <p>ST confirmed that the SFC expect the College to reach a breakeven position over the next three-year period (2020-23) and an update on the College position will be submitted to the SFC via the Financial Forecast Return. Members noted that OSCAR do not require an in-year report on the financial position as the College is deemed to be a going concern based on its current financial performance.</p> |
| Decision/Noted | To note the update report. |

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| Item FPRC3-4.3 | Non Compliant Spend Report 2020-21 | |
| Paper No: FPRC3-H | Lead: S Thompson | Action requested: Discuss |
| Decision/Noted | To note the update and progress in the volume and value of regulated non-compliant procurement expenditure. | |

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| Item FPRC3-4.4 | Health & Safety Quarterly Report | |
| Paper No: FPRC3-I | Lead: J Gribben/C Keenan | Action requested: Discuss |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>The Health and Safety report for the period November 2020 to 31 January 2021 was submitted. JFG drew attention to the significant decrease in the number of recorded accidents and incidents. This is primarily due to learning and teaching being delivered online, and other operations being undertaken off campus.</p> <p>The College is working towards a reduced return to face-to-face teaching over the next few weeks with all risk assessments currently being reviewed. Delivery of H&S training to line managers is also being considered.</p> | |
| Decision/Noted | To note the update report. | |

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| Item FPRC3-4.5 | Digital Strategy | |
| Paper No: FPRC3-J | Lead: S Thompson | Action requested: Discuss |
| Discussion/ Matters Arising | <p>BA provided the Committee with a brief overview of the draft Digital Strategy which was developed through extensive engagement with learners and College staff. The refreshed 10-year Strategy (2020-30) will continue the progress made during the delivery of the previous Systems Integration Strategy and will leverage technology to enrich both the learner and staff experience through the provision of a "Digital Campus". Six key digital objectives, which directly align with the College Strategic Priorities, have been identified. The various initiatives to support these objectives were highlighted within the Report.</p> | |

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| | <p>A technology roadmap of the digital transformation and indicative costs (£3.6m) were provided within the IT Progress Report (submitted under Item 5.1).</p> <p>Members were advised that a Digital Transformation Group has been established to provide strategic oversight and prioritisation of the technology initiatives. Each initiative will require a business case for agreement and funding approval by ELT/SMT. The new Project Management Office will also provide support for large scale project works. Full reportage will be provided to the Committee.</p> |
| Decision/Noted | To note the report and provide updates at future meetings. |

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| Item FPRC3-5.1 | IT Progress Report |
| Paper No: FPRC3-K | Lead: S Thompson Action requested: Discuss |
| Decision/Noted | To note the progress report on the delivery and operational performance of the College IT Service. |

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| Item FPRC3-5.2 | Facilities Management Report |
| Paper No: FPRC3-L | Lead: S Thompson Action requested: Note |
| Decision/Noted | To note the reportage on business as usual in Estates and Facilities Management for the operational period November 2020 – January 2021. |

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| Item FPRC3-5.3 | Credit Delivery Update |
| Paper No: FPRC3-M | Lead: S Thompson Action requested: Note |
| Decision/Noted | To note that despite the negative impact of COVID-19 on credits being delivered, the College is has fully delivered the SFC Credit target for 2019-20. |

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| Item FPRC3-6 | Any Other Notified Business |
| Paper No: | Lead: Convener Action requested: Note |
| Decision/Noted | None. |

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| Item FRPC3-7 | Disclosability of Papers |
| Paper No: | Lead: P Clark Action requested: Verbal |
| Decision/Noted | That the disclosability status of papers as described on respective cover sheets be retained. |

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| Item FPRC3-8 | Date of Next Meeting |
| Paper No: | Lead: Convener Action requested: Note |
| Decision/Noted | Wednesday 2 June 2021 |

The meeting closed at 4.50 pm.

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

| Item | Description | Owner | Target Date |
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| FPRC3-3.4 03 03 21 | Fee Waiver Policy: Adapt student version to guidance note. | ST | ASAP |
| FPRC3-3.6 03 03 21 | VLE: Submit application to Foundation subject to addition of decision gates. | ST | ASAP |
| FPRC3-3.6 03 03 21 | VLE: Submit paper for noting at next meeting of the Board. | ST/PC | 24 03 21 |
| FPRC3-4.1 03 03 21 | Financial Scenario – 5 Year Plan: submit twice yearly. | ST/PC | Ongoing |
| FPRC3-4.5 03 03 21 | Digital Strategy: Provide update reports at future meetings. | ST/BA | Ongoing |

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

| Item | Description | Owner | Target Date |
|--------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| FPRC2-3.6 02 12 20 | H&S Policy: provide additional feedback to PC prior to the next Board meeting | ALL | Prior to 16 12 20 Complete |
| FPRC2-4.2 02 12 20 | Financial Plan 2020-21: Submit applications as agreed to the College Foundation. | ST | ASAP Complete |
| FPRC1-3.1 30 09 20 | Matters Arising - Financial Regulations Update: Submit revised regulations at next meeting. | ST | 02 12 20 03 03 21 |
| FPRC1-3.1 30 09 20 | Matters Arising - Fee Waiver Policy: Submit update at next meeting. | ST | 02 12 20 03 03 21 Complete |
| FPRC1-4.5 + 4.6 30 09 20 | Review of IT and Finance Function Effectiveness Reports - Provide updates on progress of agreed actions. | ST | Ongoing Complete |
| FPRC3-4.8 | Charles Oakley Building (COB) – Draft Business Case: To progress a revised business case for COB as agreed. | RG | Ongoing |