



**FEGP COMMITTEE  
CONFIRMED MINUTES**

**Date:** 20 September 2023

**Venue:** New Boardroom, City Campus

Clerk to the Corporation

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**Present:** John Mothersole  
Holly Anderson  
Peter Brooks  
Angela Foulkes  
Stephan Hollingshead

**In attendance:** Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to the Governing Body (Clerk)  
Martin Harrison, Executive Director Finance (EDF)  
Andrew Hartley, Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director Commercial and Operations (DCE)  
Paul Simpson, Executive Director People (EDP)

**Action**

**by  
whom**      **by  
when**

**23/3/1      Welcome, introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 Apologies received from David McDougall

**23/3/2      Declaration of interest**

- 2.1 The committee noted the standing declarations of members, including that a family member of the Chair of Governors was employed by the firm appointed to manage work on the Advanced Technology Centre. As there was no decision sought on that project, no action was required.

**23/3/3      Minutes of the last meeting**

- 3.1 The committee confirmed the accuracy of the open and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2023, subject to a correction to paragraph 3.5 in the open minutes page 2, to renumber the following paragraph 3.6.

**ACTION:** amend and publish the confirmed open minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2023.

Clerk

22/9/23

## 23/3/4 Matters Arising and Action Record

- 4.1 The committee considered progress on ongoing actions not otherwise included on the agenda as follows.
- 4.2 **Minute 23/1/9.1(b): ONS Reclassification:** the action to ensure all governors were aware of the additional requirements arising from reclassification of the sector had been completed at the Governor Strategy Event on 13 September 2023. The committee agreed that this action had been completed.
- Minute 23/2/3.5ii: Peaks Plan 2024 onwards:** the information requested at the last meeting was included in item 10. Estates Strategy Working Group had considered the proposals for future use of Peaks Campus on 13 September and had endorsed the plan presented to FEGP Committee. Estates Strategy Working Group would be meeting half-termly to monitor progress. The committee agreed that this action had been completed.
- Minute 23/2/9.5i: Preventing Modern Slavery:** the Executive Director Finance (EDF) reported that the college was using an online training package to raise awareness of budget holders and finance staff of preventing modern slavery in the college's supply chains. FEGP asked for governors to be given access to the training. It was also agreed that the committee should continue to receive annual updates on progress on the Modern Slavery workplan with reporting by exception of any significant issues arising between annual reports.
- 4.3 The committee received the Action Record and agreed that it included the matters arising from the last meeting. The committee agreed that all actions had been completed and approved removal of the completed actions to the completed actions log.

**ACTION** circulate Modern Slavery online training package to governors

Clerk

27/9/23

## 23/3/5 People Report: Annual Report 2022-23

- 5.1 The Executive Director of People (EDP) introduced the Annual Report 2022-23 and highlighted the following issues:
- Attraction** changes to where the college advertises vacancies had resulted in an increase in the number of applications per vacancy.
- Absence rate** for 2022-23 continued to be reduced compared to the previous year which was evidence of the positive impact of the changes to absence management procedures approved by the committee were having a positive impact.
- Staff engagement** initiatives reported previously were being implemented including the Employee Forum and providing managers with a structure and training to make regular team meetings and staff 1:1 meetings more consistent and productive.
- Reward**, staff had accepted the 2022-23 pay award.
- Development** for 2023 included face-to-face induction training for new starters and the first run of a new development programme for

staff new to FE teaching, who needed teacher training but did not wish to take a full academic teaching qualification.

- 5.2 The committee received the assurance. Members welcomed the continuing decrease in the absence rate and endorsed that the improvement priority for 2023 was improving staff engagement. The EDP reported that they were using governor feedback from the Strategy Event on 13 September to finalise proposals for KPI and targets for 2023-24 for the committee to consider at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** draft People KPI and targets for 2023-24 to be presented to the FEGP November meeting for consideration and approval EDP 22/11/23

## 23/3/6 Health and Safety Reports

- 6.1 The EDP, as the new executive lead for Health and Safety, introduced the Health and Safety reports which comprised:

- Health and Safety Annual Report 2022-23
- In year update including completion of Fire Risk Assessment actions.

- 6.2 The committee received the report and commented as follows.

- **Annual H&S Report:** it was noted that the number of incidents was about the same as 2018-19, the last full year when most students and staff were on campus. The number of near-misses continued to rise from a low level. It was commented that it would be helpful to know the trend in injury causing incidents, any common issues and what action the college was taking. As reporting was embedded the committee would like to be able to monitor the impact of
- **Fire Risk Assessment update:** a member asked about the overdue action reported. The EDP said it was a storage area that needed clearing of redundant equipment to keep exit points. Around 50% of the items had been cleared and safe disposal of the remaining items was in progress. It was noted that there were a number of actions to be completed by 30/11/2023 and members asked for more information on the type of actions in the medium priority group.

- 6.3 The committee noted the report. FEGP was reassured that college managers continued to take action to ensure the college provides a safe environment for staff, students and visitors.

### ACTIONS:

**Near-miss reports:** provide assurance to FEGP that the increase in reported incidents is due to increased reporting rather than increased incidents. EDP 22/11/23

**Fire Risk Assessment,** provide additional assurance on the type of actions due by 30/11/2023 and these are on track for timely completion. EDP 22/11/23

## **23/3/7      Learner Recruitment Update**

7.1 Andrew Hartley, Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) presented the updated enrolment position, which showed further enrolments since the committee report had been finalised on 11/9/23. The main issues highlighted were

- **FE recruitment**, overall was tracking at or above target
- **HE recruitment** was below target but more enrolment sessions were planned for w/c 25/09/23.
- **National adjustments to GCSE grade boundaries** had meant that fewer students had met the entry grades for level 3 courses (including T Levels and A levels) and were enrolling on level 2 instead. This had also led to significantly more 16 year old entrants needing to study Level 2 English and/or maths to meet the conditions of funding. The college was accommodating the additional learners but would not receive any additional funding until 2024-25, under the lagged funding formula.

7.2 The committee received the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.

**T Level recruitment**, members asked how this new provision had performed. The DCE said that enquiries and applications had been stronger than expected but lower Level 3 conversion, as above, had affected enrolments. Recruitment to the science T Level was significantly below target. Qualified entrants were choosing established level 3 science qualifications that were more widely accepted for university entry. The way ESFA had funded T Levels meant that there would be some in-year clawback of funding whereas funding for over-recruitment on other FE provision was lagged.

**Higher education** had continued to be a challenging market with some universities reducing their entry tariff during clearing. The college's first higher level skills qualification had recruited well. This was a positive sign that the college's strategy to offer higher Technical Qualifications (HTQ) linked to careers is attractive. The development of HTQ qualifications nationally had lagged behind the original strategy but the college had been successful in securing pilot funding to develop more HTQs.

7.3 The committee noted the assurance and the actions managers were taking to areas with under-recruitment.

## **23/3/8      Commercial and Business Development Report**

8.1 Andrew Hartley, Deputy Chief Executive (DCE), presented the update including the in-year position on apprentice recruitment and completion. The DCE commented that apprenticeship recruitment was RAG rated Amber reflecting improved apprenticeship recruitment that still needed to be confirmed through completing the apprenticeship sign-up process. The report also set out the measures being taken to strengthen recruitment further including the appointment of a new Director of Business Development.

- 8.2 The committee received the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.

**Regional strategy for skills**, members asked what skills funding or support the college was receiving from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) as part of its skills strategy. The DCE said that SYMCA was funding a regional apprenticeship hub that would be a single contact point for employers to access information about training from across South Yorkshire colleges. TSC is leading the hub and has appointed two staff to run it. This fits with the college strategy to simplify routes and sign-up process for apprenticeships.

**Higher level and degree apprenticeships**, it was noted that nationally degree level apprenticeships formed the largest proportion of apprenticeship provision but this was not reflected in the college profile, which was weighted towards levels 2 and 3. Members asked if the college could secure more level 4-5 higher apprenticeships under its strategic agreement with Sheffield Hallam University (SHU). The DCE said that competition locally for higher and degree level apprenticeships was strong as SHU was the UK's largest provider of higher level and degree apprentices. There was a small amount of collaboration, for example, the college had supported SHU to offer English and maths functional skills courses to its Level 3 apprentices, however the provision was competing at Levels 4 and 5. FEGP members acknowledged the difficulty of competing at a national level with leading university providers. They recommended that the college position its offer as the leading provider for the City Region, with a proposition based on relevance and responsiveness to the city's needs and high quality.

**Commercial and other business income**, had been successful in 2022-23 with the college winning 12 tenders (from 14 bids) submitted.

- 8.3 FEGP received the report and members were assured that the college's commercial and business development activities were making an effective contribution to the college achieving key strategic objectives.

## **23/3/9 Finance Update**

- 9.1 The EDF presented the finance report including the Year End Outturn 2022-23 and an update on capital funding update requested at the last meeting. The main points highlighted were
- **2022-23 outturn** generated a surplus, irrespective of adjustments to comply with financial reporting standards. The committee welcomed the strong assurance this provided of the good health of the college's finances
  - **Borrowing**, the repayment of a loan approved by Governing Body on 12 July had been completed in the 2022-23 financial year. There was no impact on the college's compliance with its loan covenants or Reserves Policy.
  - **Capital expenditure**, the report included the profiling of grant and matched funding requested by the committee at the June

meeting and forecasts of payback for the investment in new facilities. FEGP was satisfied that the investments were prudent, the spending plans were in line with the college Estates Strategy and terms of grant and would promote the long term sustainability of the college's education offer.

- 9.2 The committee received the report and noted the assurance provided of the college's strong financial health.

### **23/3/10 Periodic Policy Review**

- 10.1 The EDF presented the following policy reviews with minor updates for the committee to consider and approve:
- **HE Tuition Fee Policy 2024-25**, which included a proposal to increase HE tuition fees for new students from September 2024. This would be the first HE fee increase since September 2021 and would go some way towards meeting the increasing costs of tuition and resources in general. The fee increase would not apply to continuing students.
  - **Reserves Policy**, members asked about the impact of the loan repayment on the college's reserves position. The EDF said that the college was still operating with available reserves above the policy limits for normal operations. The changes proposed were to the tolerances in the policy so that the college was able to continue to invest in significant capital projects when funding and financing were available. As the reserves policy related to the long-term financial sustainability of the college final approval was a matter for the Board.
  - **Financial Regulations**, the changes mainly related to post titles, responsibilities and legal requirements. The most significant change was to increase the number of bank mandate signatories, which would require GB approval.
- 10.2 The committee received the policy reviews and updated and agreed to
- Approve, on behalf of Governing Body, the revised HE Tuition Fee Policy 2024-25, including UK tuition fee of £7,950 per year for new HE students from September 2024
  - Approve the minor updates to the Financial Regulations and recommend approval to Governing Body of changes to the bank mandate signatories
  - Recommend approval to Governing Body of the updated Reserves Policy.

### **23/3/11 Estates and Environmental Sustainability Report**

- 11.1 The DCE introduced the report. Some of the discussion is recorded in a separate confidential minute.
- 11.2 **Move of Peaks provision** to other campuses: members asked how the start of year had gone and if there had been a negative impact on

student numbers or experience. The DCE said that there had not been discernible drop-out. The percentage of returning students had been better than in previous years. The college had responded to student feedback when one group of students asked to be relocated to Hillsborough rather than City – to be colocated with other groups.

#### 11.5 **Environment Sustainability update**

The DCE reported on the progress being made by the new Environmental Sustainability Manager working in partnership with the Director of Estates and other staff. The new appointment was enabling the college to make progress with the strategy and ELT would be considering a draft action plan in October prior to being submitted to governors.

Members welcomed the progress being made on tracking the college's carbon use on a monthly basis. The reduction of 6% in the last year was also welcomed but members commented that the college had some way to go to achieve Zero carbon. The DCE said that the draft action plan included actions to reduce absolute carbon use. GB had already committed to achieving net zero without recourse to carbon off-set or similar schemes. It would be a significant effort and it would be helpful if governors could show the way by completing the Carbon Literacy module in the FE & HE Roadmap.

#### 11.6 **RAAC**

The DCE confirmed that the college did not have any RAAC in its buildings and had confirmation from the landlords of Pennine 5 and Fir Vale that there is no RAAC in those buildings either. The committee was satisfied with the assurance provided.

- 11.7 The committee received the report and was assured that the implementation of the Estates and Environmental strategies was being managed appropriately. The committee approved an amendment to the authority previously delegated to the Chief Executive & Principal by GB to submit formal offers to purchase land for a new construction training centre up to the value of £3m on behalf of the corporation.

#### ACTIONS

**Circulate Carbon literacy** module to governors to complete for development

Clerk 15/10/23

### **23/3/12 Review of Meeting and Closing Remarks**

#### 12.1 FEGP members commented as follows

- Members appreciated the more succinct papers provided for the meeting. They were readable and highly informative
- The Financial Regulations again lacked tracked changes or yellow highlights. The Clerk said that there would be closer attention to this in reformatting documents for upload to the portal.

- Regarding the impact of the business on students, member commented that the capital developments discussed, health and safety, sustainability all would have a positive benefit for students and future students. The work on Modern Slavery and environmental strategy reflected college and student values.
- A member asked if there was a plan to set up a governor group to monitor environmental sustainability. The DCE said that there was currently a link governor. The project board was considering governance but the FE/HE Roadmap suggested a cross-college board involving staff and students as well as executive and governors. This would be considered further.

### **23/3/13     Date and Time of Next Meetings**

- 13.1    22/11/2023, 8.30 - 10.00 in the Boardroom, City Campus (joint meeting with Audit and Risk Assurance Committee)  
           13/03/2024, 08.30 - 10.30 in the Boardroom, City Campus  
           26/06/2024, 08.30 - 10.30 in the Boardroom, City Campus