

## RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 9 March 2022 at 4.00pm

**Present physically:** C Higgins, Chair  
E D'Souza

N Savvas, CEO  
S Clarke, Vice Chair

**In attendance:** C Shaw, Principal Sixth Form Provision  
G Chittock-Nash, Group Vice Principal Students and Admissions  
J Raffel, CFO  
L Moody, Principal Strategic Growth and Partnerships  
R Bamford, Group Vice Principal Data and MI  
R Stevenson, Group Operations Director  
S Gales, Governance Professional  
S Graham, Group HR Director

**Apologies:** J Wakelam

*The meeting started slightly later than planned at 5.15pm*

#### 1. Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence

C Higgins, E D'Souza, N Savvas and S Clarke declared their roles as Trustees of Suffolk Academies Trust. No conflicts of interest in relation to the items on the agenda were declared.

Apologies were accepted from J Wakelam.

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

#### 3. Matters Arising from the meeting held on 24 November 2021

The matters arising from the meeting were summarised in the report and all actions reported had either been completed or, where appropriate, a progress update had been provided.

MA1 R Stevenson advised that the College has completed a legal review of the Council's photovoltaic cells supply contract proposal. R Stevenson advised that whilst the Council's proposal might not be as lucrative (in terms of financial return) as other providers, the Council offers greater security than other smaller independent providers, and are still competitive enough to achieve greater energy security and environmental sustainability. Governors asked R Stevenson and the Sustainability Board to recommend the proposal to the Committee for electronic approval.

MA2 A HR KPI Report will be provided to each Committee, with additional reports (like Gender Pay Gap) ad hoc to meet statutory reporting deadlines.

MA4 The IT KPIs will be considered by the new Group Director IT.

MA6 The LRC KPIs will be reported to the Educational Excellence Committee.

MA7

#### Action

RStevenson

SGales  
ELees

#### 4. Executive Board summary report

##### 4.i. Health and Safety Overview

The Committee received and considered the overview report provided which summarised the discussions from the Health and Safety Board meeting on 9 February 2022.

R Stevenson noted that, now that Covid-19 rates are lower, the team are focussing on core health and safety compliance and monitoring work.

Governors commended the work of the Health and Safety team.

##### 4.ii. Environmental Sustainability Overview

The Committee received and considered the overview report provided which summarised the discussions from the inaugural Environmental Sustainability Board meeting on 15 February 2022.

N Savvas summarised the discussions at the Board meeting which was established to develop and oversee the implementation of the Group's Environmental and Sustainability Strategy, aligned to the DfE's strategy with 4 strategic aims:

1. Excellence in education and skills for a changing world: preparing all young people for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.
2. Net zero: reducing direct and indirect emissions from education and care buildings, driving innovation to meet legislative targets and providing opportunities for children and young people to engage practically with the net zero concept.
3. Resilient to climate change: adapting to mitigate against the worst impacts of climate change in our education and care buildings and infrastructure.
4. A better environment for future generations: enhancing biodiversity and increasing access to nature in and around education and care settings.

And to the Association of College's themes:

1. Delivering green skills and supporting green jobs;
2. Educating students and communities to build a more sustainable future, and;
3. Developing net zero campuses and building resilience to environmental change.

Governors noted that the Board is considering many areas of sustainability, some long term and some short term , some urgent and others just important.

R Stevenson noted that working practices across the Group are changing to create a culture with sustainability at its core, to consider the environmental impact of decisions before making decisions and/or purchases.

There is a need for prioritisation. Two long-term planning priorities were suggested and agreed.

(a) Given rising inflation and energy costs and energy supply concerns resulting from the conflict in Ukraine; the Committee needs to consider the College's energy strategy to ensure financial savings and environmental sustainability as well as energy independence for greater energy security.

(b) Governors also noted that the College will be expected to become net zero at some point in the future, so the Committee needs to lead on reviewing progress towards this goal. Governors noted that, like our property strategy, we need to plan the College's journey to net zero to invest appropriately to achieve our sustainability ambitions.

Governors asked the Sustainability Board to lead on proposing these strategies for the Group to the Resources Committee and Corporation.

Sust. Board

## 5. **Workforce Update**

The Committee received and considered the paper provided.

S Graham noted there has been a significant increase in the number of staff employed by the college (76 people) though the full-time equivalent is lower (31.36 FTE). Sickness absence remains under the national benchmark of 2.6% at 1.53%, and compared to the same period last year, staff absence in January 2022 is 0.3% lower. The twelve months rolling labour turnover figure is 14.47%, which is marginally lower than the national average of 14.8% and reflects national reports published by that noted that 41% of organisations had seen an increase in labour turnover in the last six months. Whilst employee relations cases remain high, significant progress has been made in reducing the number of cases. Recruitment remains high but effective, with 41 vacancies. Appraisal completion is above 80% and mandatory training completion is above 90%.

Governors queried the increase in number of staff employed and asked the cause of this and how sustainable this is. S Graham summarised the business case for the

appointments and N Savvas noted that we are currently restricting additional appointments and reviewing staffing utilisation and staffing structures to ensure efficiency.

Governors asked if there has been an increase in flexible working as a result of the pandemic. S Graham noted that as an organisation we are being much flexible with our approach to working patterns, and advised that a revised policy will be brought to the Committee in due course.

SGraham

Governors discussed that it is crucial that we have an effective policy to compete both within our sector and with the private sector to attract and retain the best staff; and to be able to proactive manage staff and maintain an effective staffing culture despite flexible working arrangements.

**6. Property Update**

The Committee received and considered the papers provided.

Governors noted the updates on the infrastructure projects at the College including remedial works to emergency lights, electrical testing and socket upgrades, legionella remedial works, fire door replacement and repairs, comparative report structure surveys, improved external lighting for identified dark spots across the car parks and routes between buildings for increased security, upgrades to the CCTV network, Australia House roof renewal, gas pipeline integrity testing and certification and the replacement of fire panel and fire infrastructure. Governors also noted the next series of works planned and received updates on the developments at each campus.

R Stevenson advised that the three T Level Wave 3 proposals are out for tender. The Committee agreed to receive and consider a proposal paper via email from R Stevenson to appoint the suppliers for each T Level Wave 3 tenders.

RStevenson

R Stevenson advised that we are submitting a bid for T Level Wave 4 for Automotive Engineering. Governors noted that the match funding element is under the threshold requiring pre-submission approval by the Finance Committee; but asked R Stevenson to provide information of the potential match funding implication to the Finance Committee.

RStevenson

R Stevenson advised that work underway to utilise the OfS Capital Grant, including the tender to appoint the construction supplier. R Stevenson and J Raffel to advise whether governors need to approve the construction supplier.

RStevenson  
JRaffel

**7. IT Update**

The Committee received and considered the papers provided.

R Stevenson reported on IT as the new IT Director has only just started his role. R Stevenson noted that significant work has been undertaken to strengthen IT security and performance improvements. Further work is planned to address weaknesses in the network infrastructure including significantly increasing broadband capacity, upgrading firewalls and web filtering systems, migrating critical systems to cloud based storage and increasing interconnections between the campus buildings; and is strengthening the IT team with a new Group Director IT and a Group Cyber Security lead and Group Networking lead to bring new skills and bridge skill gaps.

Governors commended the progress of the team and asked to be informed if there unanticipated any setbacks or additional costs.

**8. Policies**

**8.i. Anti-Bribery**

The Committee received and considered the policy provided.

Governors recommended that an addition is made to the policy to clearly state to staff what and when they should refer gifts to the gift register, as outlined in the Financial

SGraham  
JRaffel

Regulations. It was also suggested that this policy should be separately advertised to staff so they are fully aware.

Governors **agreed to recommend** the amended policy to the Corporation for approval.

**8.ii. Employee Privacy**

The Committee received, considered and **agreed to recommend** the policy provided to the Corporation for approval.

**8.iii. Freedom of Information**

The Committee received, considered and **agreed to recommend** the policy provided to the Corporation for approval.

**9. Any Other Business**

No items.

The meeting closed at 6.17pm