

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of CORPORATION

Thursday 1 December 2022, 15.00-16.00pm College Business Centre

115/22DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

116/22UTILITY SAVINGS

The Assistant Principal (Finance & Resources) introduced the report on potential utility cost savings. The Chair introduced the discussion noting the need to weigh up the benefits of cost savings against the risks of the potential impact of decisions made. He invited questions and comments from Members.

A Member noted the strategy of putting students first and questioned how one could be certain of the impact on students particularly those on practical courses such as carpentry. The Assistant Principal responded that block closures were planned such that all students received their learning entitlement without any prejudicial impact.

Reputational risk was noted.

The Acting Assistant Principal (Teaching, Learning & Students and HR) reported that initial consultation with the trade unions resulted in questions as to how staff would be compensated for the costs of working from home if week long site closures in January and February 2023 went ahead. It had been proposed that a limited number of buildings remain open however trade unions had advised all members to work on site. It was not advised to require staff to work from home. Any payments to staff to compensate for home working would offset the potential utility cost savings that could be achieved.

The importance of good communications and public relations was noted. There had already been a leak onto social media.

The Principal reported that it would be possible to forward plan for moving to a potential 4 day on site working week but that there would be a need to consider the impact on staff terms and conditions.

Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable learners was considered a priority.

There were concerns for student retention if site closures in January and February were implemented. Any home learning would need to be highly structured considered the Deputy Principal.

A Member asked if it would be possible to cut one day per week but add an hour of learning to each of the other days but this was not considered viable.

A Member enquired whether proposed closures would affect contracts with UKSA and Platform One. It was not considered that there would be an impact as these learners were taught at the provider sites.

It was noted that if cost savings were not made from week long closures savings would need to be identified elsewhere.

A Member commented that week long closures in January and February represented little notice for parents and could result in parental dissatisfaction.

A Member commented that building utilisation was key. A Member asked if the senior management team (SMT) could explore the introduction of a 4 day week on site from Easter.

The Corporation resolved to support the SMT in finding ways to move towards a 4 day week on site, to further explore building and staff utilisation, and to identify potential cost savings in year but they did not support week long building closures in January and February 2023.

The Chair thanked SMT for the work that had gone into the detailed proposals and projections presented.

The Corporation considered the report and CONFIRMED the following decisions:

- Agreed partial closures of building blocks to enable utility cost savings
- Did not agree closure of the College site for one week (4 days in January 2023)
- Did not agree closure of the College site for one week (5 days in February 2023).

117/22 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Wednesday 14 December: Capital Committee, 12.00-13.30; Governor Updating Session, 14.00-15.30; Corporation 16.00-18.30.