

THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2022

MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Youness Abidou	<i>apologies</i>	Member, Vice Chair of the Corporation, Chair of F & R
Paul Butler	present	Member, Chair of the Corporation, Safeguarding Champion
Gary Davies	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Paul Douglas	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Michael Eichhorn	present	Member
Janet Gardner	present	Member, Principal & Chief Executive Member
Andrew Hall	present	Member
Susannah Hume	present	Member
Fosterer Joseph	present	Staff Member
Alison Morris	present	Member, Vice Chair of the Corporation, Chair of C & Q, Careers Champion
Renatta Nzomono	present	Member, Chair of A & R
Amir Seyyad	present	Member
Gbeminiyi Soyinka	present	Member
Neil Taylor	present	Member
Jacqueline Young	<i>apologies</i>	Member

CLERK TO THE CORPORATION

Naomi Shoffman Director of Governance (DoG)

IN ATTENDANCE

Hassan Rizvi	Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)
Abena Rodman -Tay	Deputy Principal Finance & Resources (DPFR)
Amir Ahmed	Director of Learner Services, Marketing and Communications (DLSMC)
Jade Blackburn	Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development (DHROD)
Nadeem Khalifa	Director of BIDU (DBIDU)
Antoinette Beekye	Incoming Staff Governor

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) the Corporation agreed that meetings may be held using Teams videoconferencing as per the Waltham Forest College Instrument & Articles, Instrument 1 (g).

33.22 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. He reminded everyone that the majority of the reports coming to this meeting have already been scrutinised by the relevant Committees' which have made recommendations accordingly.
- Apologies were received from the following members: Mr Abidou – due to illness, Mr Davies due to working overseas, Mr Douglas due to Council business commitment and Ms Young due to work commitments.
- It was agreed to change the order of the agenda to enable presenting staff members to leave the meeting after their reports had been considered.

34.22 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mr Taylor reminded the Corporation of his employment with Leyton Orient Trust; a sub-contractor of the College. Ms Morris, Ms Hume, Mr Hall and Mr Soyinka declared an interest in 53.22.

35.22 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 15 MARCH 2022

The Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 15 March 2022, were agreed by the Corporation to be signed by the Chair as a true record.

36.22 MATTERS ARISING

The DoG went through the action list and confirmed that all had been completed in line with the agreed target date.

37.22 PRINCIPAL'S COLLEGE REPORT

The Principal said she would take the report as read and then highlighted the following key points:

- The College has performed well, despite the many challenges, against the majority of its KPIs this academic year.
- The financial position of the College remains strong with a forecasted financial health rating of outstanding. Current cash days are well above Further Education Commissioner's (FEC) KPI of >25 days. This has further strengthened the College's financial position which has in turn supported a higher pay award offer for staff for 2022/23.
- Recruitment has continued with a steady trajectory of growth in all areas except apprenticeships, which in line with national performance has seen a declining trend. Overall applications for 16-19 study programmes are 17% higher than at the same point in 2020/21.
- School engagement strategy is starting to have a positive impact
- T Levels will be a continuing Government priority although numbers nationally are still quite low. The College is continuing to develop routes for first delivery 2023/24 and transition programmes are in place for 2022/23
- Improvement strategies have continued to demonstrate a positive impact across the curriculum, and these were highlighted during the pilot Ofsted inspection and in the recent achievement of whole college accreditation for the Matrix Standard.
- Despite the ongoing challenges of attendance and 2021-22 being the first full year of exams following two years of teacher assessed grades, the College has continued to make improvements to quality and overall achievement rates are predicted to be broadly in line with 2021-21 and the last published national average.
- To further raise the profile and build the reputation of the College and develop strategic partnerships, the Principal continues to meet with external stakeholders and represent the College on several strategic boards and help to inform policy.
- The College has been successfully awarded the Mayor's Skills Academy quality kitemark for five separate curriculum areas including Green, Health and Social Care, Hospitality, Creative and Construction. This was a competitive process and Waltham Forest College is one of few colleges to have achieved this status across five different areas.
- The College has recently been successful in achieving 'whole college' accreditation for the Matrix Standard. As part of the assessment, the assessor met with over 60 staff, managers and leaders including the Chair of Corporation and several different groups of students. The full report will be circulated to the Board once received
- The most recent student survey elicited a response rate of 93%, which is very high for this type of survey and is a huge achievement. The overall student satisfaction rate though marginally lower than last year, given the much higher return rate, was positive.
- The Staff survey response rate was a bit lower than the previous year but positive in some of the key areas. The feedback and workshop outcomes will be reported in the HR annual report

- Focus groups will be used to gain more qualitative information on responses to help inform targeted actions to further improve both the student and staff satisfaction rates.
- The final Student Council Meeting, themed 'Police Engagement and Personal Development' was held this term. Panel discussions included - Stop & Search, reporting a crime, parent communication, crimes against women and safety walks outside college. Students were given the opportunity to hear more about the role of police officers in within the local community. The event also provided a platform for students to discuss current events such as the recent Child Q case and e-scooter regulations surrounding the recent death of a student at a neighbouring college. There remain a need to for students to be clearer about how to contact the Be safe team and the College needs to do some testing around safeguarding.

The Principal concluded her report and invited questions/comments:

The Chair commended the excellent job achieving the Matrix Standard especially as the assessor had been to the college several times over the years and so has seen the improvement in this College and the assessor commented on 'its amazing journey'

A Governor queried the gap in the staff survey response rate. The principal responded that she suspected that there was likely to be a far lower participation from agency staff as this was the first year agency staff have been included and also it may be how questions are asked and the way people are scoring themselves. A Governor asked about the response to the statement around performance and targets which scored in the lower quartile and the Principal responded that this was not a surprise as it links in with training for managers and the new HR system.

A Governor asked about the distance travelled percentages and the Principal explained how this is calculated.

A Governor asked whether the Targets are for the full year and the Principal explained that this is the case for certain areas and how it works in others

A Governor asked at what point would recruitment capacity be an issue for quality and performance. There followed a discussion around the main impact being (un)able to recruit teachers in some areas of expertise. The Principal advised that should we exceed the 1855 allocation it essentially means we are delivering for free as the lagged funding mechanisms means the additional funding would not be received this year. A certain amount of growth has been costed into the budget to allow for this. It is an investment as if we are to achieve growth, it ensures an increased allocation the following year. SLT and middle managers meet regularly to monitor the progress of recruitment by area and by course. This is to ensure efficient use and allocation of resources.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **NOTE THE PROGRESS AGAINST FINANCIAL KPIS FOR 2021/22.**
- **NOTE THE PROGRESS AGAINST QUALITY KPIS FOR 2021/22.**
- **NOTE THE IMPACT OF STRATEGIES TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS.**

38.22 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING ON 18 MAY 2022

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED AND NOTED THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING

39.22 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY REPORT

The DPCQ introduced the report which provides an update on College performance for Term 3 of 2021/22 and ongoing actions. He highlighted progress against key performance indicators including:

- The pilot Ofsted inspection was carried out from 22-25 March 2022. The key outcomes of the inspection are in the report.
- The overall current retention rate is slightly below end of year retention of 2020-21 but above National Rate.
- Current predicted achievement as at the June 2022 census point all ages including English and Maths is in the range of 86%-90% (Provider Group Average-86.7%). Overall outcomes for 2020-21 were at 88.9%.
- Engagement strategies to support learners with their outcomes have been successful enabling them to achieve their qualifications. Predicted achievements for 2021-22 are broadly in line with the previous year across all ages, 16-18 and 19+ age groups.
- 58% of the additional qualifications, have already been claimed while others are being processed with a small minority still being assessed.
- The FEPDG Project is complete. There was a small amount of under-utilisation of the funding allocated to cover travel expenses due to a low claim rate from staff.
- Progress against Quality KPIs.
 - Retention
 - Attendance
 - Learner Satisfaction rates

The DPCQ then outlined progress on the quality cycle and the other areas for improvement and ongoing action in curriculum and quality.

Discussions ensued around the following matters:

- Being Ofsted ready and likely outcomes; we need to be clear ourselves what we are aspiring too with high expectations across the institution as this is more important than how we perform in an inspection
- Attendance issues
- The impact of the cost of living crisis
- The change in achievement compared to last year and how the figures were predicted
- What else need to be done to achieve outstanding grades.
- What we can do in terms of lessons learnt consistency and actions in the QIP

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE PROGRESS ON KEY ASPECTS OF CURRICULUM AND QUALITY

40.22 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

The DLSMC presented the Safeguarding and Prevent Report and highlighted the following points and work the team has been doing around these areas.

- There has been a decrease in referrals compared to the previous year compared to the comparative position the previous year.
- 24% of referrals are linked to non-safeguarding
- The breakdown of all the safeguarding concerns and key categories and headlines.
- The retention percentage of learners that fall into a safeguarding category after the 42-day period. the number of learners that fall under a vulnerable category who have received support by cross-college departments and their retention page 5 strategic partnership all things identified.

- Waltham Forest College participates in the Waltham Forest Children’s Safeguarding Board and is the only representation for post-16 education. This has enabled proactive engagement across the boards and the associated subgroups, whilst enabling ‘overarching’ priorities (as listed in the report) and multi-agency Partnership.
- Waltham Forest College Destinations his one of only a few colleges that has carers accreditation
- All staff will complete their safeguarding refresher training for 2022/23 on July 2022 CPD days. Further localised training will be delivered in August 2022.

A Governor asked if there are any particular groups of vulnerable learners the College needs to look at. The DLSMC explained how the leaners are identified, and actions taken to support and retain them. In most cases these learners’ starting point is lower than the College average

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

41.22 CONTRACTS

i. Subcontracting

The DBIDU advised that The College conducted a fully compliant 2-stage Restricted Tender process for their Sub-Contracted Learning Services contracts. The College was supported by Tenet through the process. The DBIDU went through the organisation who has been awarded a contract and the values for each. He then explained the rationale for and the cap on subcontracting which is below the Government threshold. The Board commended the level of detail that is included in this report, giving clear oversight.

ii. Agency / Partnership

The DBIDU advised that The College conducted a fully compliant single-stage Open Tender process for their Temporary Agency Staff contracts for the BIP department. The College was supported by Tenet through the process. The DBIDU went through the organisations who has been awarded a contract. It is standard as part of the framework to appoint each organisation for three years with an annual assessment if not performing.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **APPROVE THE ORGANISATIONS AWARDED SUB-CONTRACTED LEARNING SERVICES CONTRACTS**
- **APPROVE THE ORGANISATIONS AWARDED CONTRACTS TO SUPPLY AGENCY STAFF**

42.22 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

i. Absence Management Procedures

The DHROD presented the policy and went through the summary of the changes from the last approved version of the Absence Management Procedure and explained the main changes and reasons for them.

Members raised several queries and the DHROD responded as follows:

- The process for consultation with unions.
- The absence statistics will be in the HR report with a caveat that previous data was manually input so we won’t be comparing like for like. Long term absence rates are still high after excluding out covid absence. There is still a question as to whether absence is being consistently reported and we need to provide some training and support to manger on this.

- The reason for requirement to phone in sickness is that managers need to know as early as possible if teacher can't make it.
- The Return to work process should be easy for managers and absentees to comply with now there is a new system in place. It was suggested that this should sit alongside the statement about well-being How OH referrals are made, and the recommendations implemented which are considered on a case by case basis

The Chair recorded his support of this policy and all the work being done by the HR team.

Having discussed the policy members suggested and agreed the following changes:

- To insert line about return to work being a way to support staff
- To amend point 18.1 to the Corporation being the approving authority

ii. Probation Procedure

The DHROD presented the policy and went through the summary of the changes from the last approved version of the Probation Procedure

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- APPROVE THE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES SUBJECT TO THE AGREED CHANGES
- APPROVE THE PROBATION PROCEDURE

43.22 FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON 19 MAY AND 21 JUNE(DRAFT) 2022

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED AND NOTED THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

44.22 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGET 2022-23

The DPFR presented draft budget for the financial year 2022/23 and a forecast 2023/24 which includes the forecast, assumptions and explanation for the key variances. The DPFR then highlighted the following points:

- The financial objectives of the College and how specifically, these objectives will be achieved by maintaining a sound financial base in line with our draft Financial Risk Management KPI
- The 2022-23 Budget shows a budget surplus after allowing for restructuring costs. Income has increased by 7% compared to 2021-22 forecast and total expenditure has increased by 10% compared to 2021-22 forecast.
- The 2023-24 forecast shows a budget surplus after allowing for restructuring costs. There is a reduction in total income of 0.6% compared to 2022-23 budget. There is a 0.1% increase in total expenditure compared to 2022-23 budget.
- Total pay cost (including Partnership Cost) in 2022-23 has increased by 15% and assumes a 3% pay increase amongst other increments.
- The pay cost has an assumed in-year savings in both 2022/23 and 2023/24
- The Pay cost includes agency and contingency cost in both years. Also, for 2023-24, it is assumed the employer's contribution to the Local Government Pension Scheme will increase
- Non pay cost (including sub-contracting cost) has increased by 2%. mainly due to increase in utility costs and general inflation.
- Budgeted Key Performance Indicators /Key Budget Assumptions for Income and Expenditure
- The most significant financial risks posed through the forecast period, many of which are common to all the sector

The DPFR concluded her report by saying that, the key points and assumptions for this draft budget has been fully discussed by the Finance and Resources Committee at their June meeting.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGET 2022-23

45.22 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2020-21 – MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 MAY 2022

The DPFR spoke to the Management Accounts to 31 May 2022 Highlighting the key points:

- The result shows a forecast surplus of £1,028k
- The Financial Health Score is 'Outstanding'.
- The Cash balance at 31st May was £9,292k and 160 cash days, against the FEC target of >25 cash days. This includes £643k advanced payment from the Erasmus project due to start in 2022/23. Excluding this receipt from Erasmus, the cash days is 149.

The DPFR then highlighted issues that could impact on the college accounts.

THE CORPORATION:

- **RECEIVED AND NOTED THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 MAY 2022 RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE.**
- **NOTED THE KEY FINANCIAL RISKS BEING MANAGED AND THE MITIGATING ACTIONS BEING TAKEN BY THE COLLEGE.**

46.22 TUITION FEES POLICY

The DPFR highlighted the key changes to the Tuition policy which reflects further updated governance guidance. The policy had been fully scrutinised by the Finance and Resources Committee who had recommended it for approval.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE TUITION FEES POLICY

47.22 TRANSFORMATION CAPITAL UPDATE/APPROVAL

The DPFR went through the report highlights:

- The College has been successful with one of the two Capital bid applications.
- The transformational grant has been previously approved by the Board.
- The original bid was to refurbish the west wing at a cost of £10m. This bid has been approved subject to the increased match funding of £1.5m.
- The DFE has requested the College to sign the funding agreement and return by the 17th July 2022 with supplementary information requested.

The DPFR then advised that WFC has been successful in the bid opportunity for T Levels, however we have had to increase our match funding to 50% - £1.5m and there is a concern around affordability as this would take us over our reserves policy and we may be taking too much commitment on.

The Board having discussed this, agreed to delegate the decision to the Chair and Vice Chair, once the modelling has been done. It was noted that there will be other opportunities in the future and that WFC shouldn't bid for everything if it has a detrimental impact on the finances. The timeline is 31st August which gives us some time over the summer to look at this. It was noted the need to discuss capacity of staff as well as looking at the finances.

The Board commended this excellent outcome.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **APPROVE THE GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH THE DFE AND REQUEST FOR INCREASED MATCH FUNDING.**
- **DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR RE THE T LEVEL BID DECISION**

48.22 ESTATES, PLANNING AND PROPERTY WORKING GROUP

The Chair of Estates and Planning Committee and the DPFRR updated the Board on the considerable work that has been taking place over the past year with Countryside to formalise the original agreement they had committed to the college and reach an agreement with regard to access arrangements. This has included the safety of students and staff and limiting the disruption as far as possible to college operations.

The College had only received the final outstanding information from Countryside that afternoon and following receipt of this, the College's Solicitors sent the final Access Agreement to Countryside. As soon as Countryside confirm that they are in agreement with this, it will need to be approved by the Corporation.

THE CORPORATION AGREED THAT IN ORDER NOT TO HOLD UP THE PROCESS THAT GOVERNORS WILL REVIEW AND APPROVE THE FINAL ACCESS AGREEMENT ONCE CIRCULATED AND APPROVE BY EMAIL.

49.22 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING ON 5 JULY

The Chair of the Committee provided a verbal report on the meeting. The Committee had considered Internal Audit reports which were all positive, the Financial Statements 2021/22 Audit Arrangements and the changes to the updated Reserves Policy. Also considered were next year's IA Plan, Treasury management Policy, the risk register and the Committee's Terms of Reference which are all substantive items on this agenda.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE VERBAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

50.22 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

The DPFRR thanked Mr Eichhorn for his help in drafting this policy; she then presented the paper and highlighted the following:

- The policy outlines the College's approach to treasury management and documents the roles and responsibilities of the Corporation, the Senior Leadership Team and other key parties in relation to treasury management.
- Cash days aligning to reserves policy in conjunction with Risk appetite in RM
- The policy gives a guide to the minimum amount of cash reserves that should be maintained in the College bank account before any investment decision is made. This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Risk Appetite Strategy moving forward ones approved.
- The policy had been fully scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Committee who has recommended it for approval.

The Principal commented that both this policy and the Reserves policy are very helpful and thanked the members who helped with the drafting of them.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

51.22 DRAFT INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2022/23

The DPFRR went through the report and highlighted The Operational Plan for 2022/23, scope and visits dates for each review. The plan has been fully scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Committee who had recommended it for approval. The Committee will be involved in the scoping of each review to ensure it covers everything.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2022/23

52.22 COLLEGE RISK REGISTER.

The DPFRR presented the risk register which shows pre and post mitigation scorings, and the controls in place to mitigate risks. The Key risk number and activities are:

- 2 Learner Targets: New College Internal Funding Audits post now in place to help further improve internal processes and give greater assurance to External Auditors on how funding is claimed.
- 8 Planning: Estates and sustainability strategy/road map is under review to help plan for net zero carbon emission by 2030.
- 9 Finance: The potential reclassification of Colleges by ONS may affect the College's ability to borrow in future and impact on its future plans.
- 10 People: the residual risk score changed from 16 to 12
- 11 ICT: Increased Cyber security budget and planned Cyber Security Review and SLT workshops to further strengthen College processes and inform strategy moving forward

THE CORPORATION NOTED PROGRESS MADE IN ALL RISK AREAS.

53.22 SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING ON 21 JUNE 2022

The Board considered the Committee's report on the Governor appointments recommendations.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **APPROVE THE EXTENSION OF THE APPOINTMENTS FOR THE FULL FOUR-YEAR TERM (TILL SEPTEMBER 2025) OF**
 - **CLLR DOUGLAS**
 - **MR HALL**
 - **MS HUME**
 - **MR SOYINKA**
- **APPROVE THE REAPPOINTMENT OF MS MORRIS FOR A FURTHER TERM OF OFFICE OF 4 YEARS (TILL OCTOBER 2026)**
- **MR GURMAN CONTINUING AS A CO-OPTED MEMBER OF THE CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE TO BE REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.**
- **NOTE THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING ON 21 JUNE 2022**

54.22 GOVERNANCE

The DoG spoke to her report and highlighted the following:

- The Corporation's Instrument and Articles, Standing Orders and Terms of Reference for the Committees and working group presented have been reviewed by the relevant Committees and are recommended for approval. The amends were mainly around tidying up and change of titles etc.

- The proposed Committee membership, dates of meetings 2022/23, and workplan had been previously circulated for review and comment to all members.
- All actions in the Board Review Action Plan have been completed.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **APPROVE THE CORPORATION’S INSTRUMENT AND ARTICLES, STANDING ORDERS AND THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUP**
- **APPROVE THE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP, DATES OF MEETINGS 2022/23, AND WORKPLAN**
- **NOTE THE COMPLETION OF BOARD REVIEW ACTION PLAN**

55.22 THANK YOU TO RETIRING STAFF AND STUDENT GOVERNORS

The Corporation conveyed their thanks to the retiring staff and student governors.

56.22 ANY OTHER ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

57.22 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Corporation – Tuesday 11 October 2022

21:05 Staff and student members left the meeting ahead of Part 2.

Part 2

Minutes

58.22

59.22

*The meeting closed at
21.25*

These minutes have been approved by the Corporation as a correct record.	
CHAIR: Paul Butler	DATE: 11 October 2022
	REMOTE CONFIRMATION: Paul Butler OR SIGNED: Paul Butler