

THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

14 DECEMBER 2021

MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Youness Abidou	present	Member, Vice Chair of the Corporation, Chair of F & R
Nadia Ahmed	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Craig Buist	present	Staff Member
Paul Butler	present	Member, Chair of the Corporation, Safeguarding Champion
Gary Davies	present	Member
Paul Douglas	present	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
Gbeminiyi Soyinka	present	Member
Neil Taylor	present	Member
Jacqueline Young	present	Member
Vanessa Georgiou	<i>apologies</i>	Student Member
Meghan Muller	present	Student Member

CLERK TO THE CORPORATION

Naomi Shoffman Director of Governance (DoG)

IN ATTENDANCE

Hassan Rivzi Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)
Abena Rodman -Tay Deputy Principal Finance & Resources (DPFR)
Amir Ahmed Director Services for Students (DSfS)

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).

107.21 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- The Chair welcomed all to the meeting in person. He reminded everyone that further to the new governance structure in place 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 member: Vanessa Georgiou, due to family commitments. The Chair advised that Nadia Ahmed who had been granted a leave of absence due to ill health is still unwell so is likely to step down in the new Year.

108.21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Neil Taylor reminded the Corporation of his employment with Leyton Orient Trust; a sub-contractor of the College. Paul Douglas reminded the Corporation that he is a Waltham Forest Councillor.

109.21 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 28 September 2021, were agreed by the Corporation to be signed by the Chair as a true record, subject to the correction of formatting of the attendance list.

110.21 MATTERS ARISING

The DoG went through the action list and confirmed that all had been completed in line with the agreed target date, a couple of the actions have not yet reached the target date. There were no outstanding matters arising which were not already on the agenda.

111.21 PRINCIPAL'S COLLEGE REPORT

The Principal said that in the interest of time she would take the report as read and then highlighted the following key points:

- The College is continuing to make some really good progress
- The first term has started very positively with a continued trend of growth for recruitment. In particular recruitment for 16-19-year-old learners has exceeded allocation and is 70 above the same point in 2020/21 This is important because of lagged funding so will result in an increase in allocation next year of circa £220k
- Adult learners' recruitment looks strong.
- Covid measures continue to be put in place in line with government guidance; accordingly, SLT decided to cancel the Christmas staff party and provide team lunches as an alternative
- The DfE immersion visit was very successful
- The College held its first Sustainability Conference for student representatives from across the College. Which resulted in the students drawing up and presenting an action plan to SLT
- Progress on the Education Professional Development Grant work is going well. -The staff Governor reported that he has been out that day on one of the placements and saw some very interesting work going on and opportunities to do things that staff and students would not usually come across in the learning place.
- Progress on development of HE with London Metropolitan University is going well. L3 recruitment has increased by 10% and these opportunities not only provides new pathways but also another progression route for current students.
- The Principal has been asked to sit on the Hiring and Skills Working Group which reports to the Mayor of London's Recovery Board in the capacity as an anchor employer.
- As part of the ongoing strategy to introduce more recognition and reward incentives to continue to improve the working conditions of all staff and raise morale, several measures have been taken already this academic year such as offering free flu vaccinations, free breakfasts, staff awards and an additional day's annual leave at Christmas.
- The senior team are constantly looking at ways of improving conditions for staff. We need to look at how we can give more pay to address Recruitment & Retention of the workforce, so if we can afford to, we would want to give a more substantial rise for next year to take into account inflation The College has worked hard to increase the funding available per learner, to maximise overall funding. This has resulted in an increase in students studying in the higher bands of study programmes, and therefore positively impacts the funding allocation in future years.
- Cash days are at 192 (excluding Erasmus funding) compared to 118 in the financial plan. Current forecast for end of year surplus is £533k compared to £346k in the financial plan. This is very positive although its early in the year.
- Following the success of the first stage, the College submitted the second stage submission in October for both bids which required development to RIBA stage 2. The DfE were due to announce successful bids in December, but this is likely to be delayed now until early Spring.
- Planning update – some further meetings with Countryside have taken place since the report was submitted. Countryside have not yet completed any of the commitments agreed in the letter and there have been some queries on what was agreed for example the use of the college rear car park. The Principal is taking advice on formalising the agreement to further protect the college. She the EPPWG asked whether there is anything else Governors can do to help. The Principal said that it would be helpful if one or two Governors could attend the

meetings with Countryside and she will discuss this outside the meeting.

- The Principal continues to meet with external stakeholders and represent the College on several strategic boards. In terms of impact a lot of the stakeholder engagement leads to collaborative bids,
- A comprehensive set of key performance indicators (KPIs) has been developed for 2021/22 in line with the recommendations from the Board Review. These KPIs have been developed to further support the monitoring of progress against the College's strategic objectives.

Questions/comments were invited

A Governor commended on the highly impactful nature of the stakeholder engagement, congratulated the college on the recruitment figures and on the HE development with LMU.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **APPROVE THE NEW STRATEGIC KPIS FOR 2021/22**
- **NOTE THE GOOD PROGRESS AGAINST FINANCIAL KPIS FOR 2021/22**
- **NOTE THE GOOD PROGRESS AGAINST QUALITY KPIS FOR 2021/22**

112.21. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2020-21

The DPFR presented the following reports and documents which had been previously presented to the Board members at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 2nd December 2021.

- The Financial Statements for 2020-21 and the Audit Findings Report
- The Regularity Audit Report
- The Letter of Representation

The final draft presented here incorporate the changes, and amendments agreed with the Financial Statements Auditors at that meeting. The annual accounts key highlights are:

- Improved surplus after adjustments of £2,101k
- Balance sheet liabilities of £8,869k
- Pension liability reduced to £25,916k
- Cash position improved to £7,042k

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE:

- **THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2020-21 AND THE AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT**
- **THE REGULARITY AUDIT REPORT**
- **THE LETTER OF REPRESENTATION**

113.21 FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING ON 11 NOVEMBER 2021

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

114.21 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2020-21 – MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR 31 OCTOBER 2021

The DPFR spoke to the Management Accounts to 31 October 2021 Highlighting the key points:

- The year to date financial results for the three months ending 31st October 2021 show a surplus of £344k compared to year to date budget of £87k resulting in a favourable variance of £257k
- The result shows a year end forecast surplus of £533k
- The Financial Health Score is 'Outstanding'.
- The Cash balance at 31st October was £9,744k and 206 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 192.

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

- Recruitment of staff as the College is having to pay more than for current incumbents of roles at same level.
- Another lockdown will may have an impact on college accounts
- AEB funding is a risk as the threshold for clawback is back to 97%
- Inflation at the moment is at 3-4%
- Prices of consumables have doubled

The Principal advised that the Finance & Resources Committee had discussed the risk of trying to maintain financial health of outstanding at the expense of being able to recruit staff or provide a pay award, and it was agreed that staff pay should take priority over an outstanding grade. The college should at least retain a rating of good but needs to invest in staff going forward. The Principal added that they are also issues around minimum living wage and the forthcoming NI increase so we need to look in a very different way how to pay staff in the future to continue to improve and remain competitive. At the request of the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee a discussion ensued around pay and the difficulty in recruiting. After some discussion it was agreed in principal that members support paying people at the right level to get the right people but need to be mindful about where that puts us given that some public sector organisations have not had a pay rise. It was noted that there is a lot of provision closing where staff have not been invested in, so if we are doing the right thing which can be evidenced and justified then we should do that.

The Principal was asked to bring a paper on this to Board's meeting in March. A Governor suggested that in terms of the financial health grading going from outstanding to good the Board could as part of the strategy day go through where we want to be in each area and have a strategy and know where we want to go.

A Governor asked if there was anything that can be done to reduce reliance on consumables, to save money and help the environment and the DPFR said that where possible printing is being limited and that the sustainability strategy is working through actions that will also help with efficiencies.

THE CORPORATION:

- **RECEIVED AND NOTED THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 OCTOBER 2021 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.**

115.21 COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2020/21 AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2021/22

The DPCQ provided a brief summary of the College Self- Assessment Report 2020/21(SAR) and Quality Improvement plan 21/22 (QIP) and highlighted the following:

- Overall effectiveness judgement remains "Good".
- All aspects are Graded Good.
- The improvement all the progression and destination outcomes are particularly important.
- How the SAR validation process was managed
- The changes that were suggested by the C&Q committee
- The format has been adapted to the new Ofsted education inspection framework
- The College has been successful in achieving these outcomes despite the challenges of Covid

The DPCQ continued that with regard to the QIP we recognise certain actions need to be taken for instance with attendance there is still work required and there are pockets of areas where we need to improve and there are actions in the QIP to address those. The DPCQ concluded his presentation saying that achieving all these outcomes really proves the College has come a long way.

Questions/comments were invited

Governors said this was a fantastic achievement and commended the College's response to Covid and level of support

provided to staff and students.

The Chair commented that the results of the staff satisfaction survey, which demonstrates the progress that has been made since the last survey in 2019, speaks for itself.

A Governor asked how do we continue on this trajectory and what is it that is missing. The DPCQ responded that continuous consistency is a big challenge to address but it is positive to recognise it. He then went through and gave examples of the actions being put in place to address the various challenges, including closer scrutiny, extra support for individual students, giving Math and English students the opportunity of early resit exams to give them practice and constant monitoring.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **VALIDATE THE KEY JUDGEMENTS AND APPROVE THE COLLEGE SAR 2020/21**
- **NOTE THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR 2021/22.**

116.21 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING ON 25 NOVEMBER 2021

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

117.21 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY REPORT

The DPCQ spoke to the Curriculum and Quality Report providing an update on college performance for Term 1 of 2021/22 and ongoing actions and highlighted the following:

- Recruitment and retention for 16-19 and adults is good.
- Staff development is ongoing to update their professional vocation and industrial skills.
- Other CPD has been delivered to support staff with Ofsted preparation in line with the new framework
- Overall attendance requires improvement as an example post covid adult attendance gone down. The Principal advised that many learners seem to miss college due to being offered extra work so we need to be agile in how to support these learners
- The other areas for improvement and actions taken to address them

Questions/comments were invited

A Governor asked whether we have talked to other colleges who have been inspected under the new framework? The DPCQ confirmed we have and that he a member of the AoC's C&Q group, where members have provided inspection feedback and appear to have shared similar experiences. The DPCQ said he is also attending the updates and going through inspection reports as they come out.

The Principal advised that the SGR Committee had agreed that in preparation for Ofsted, SLT will provided an update on finance and curriculum ahead of the next corporation meeting.

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

118.21. REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING/PREVENT POLICY

The DSfS presented the updated SAFEGUARDING/PREVENT Policy and Procedures which has been completely revised to comply in line with KCSIE 2021 and Ofsted. New information and guidance have been added which will help staff understand if safeguarding need

A Governor queried the references to schools in the document. The DSfS advised that much of the legal guidance specifies schools which includes colleges and said that this will be further amended within the policy

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

119.21. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING ON 2 DECEMBER 2021

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

120.21 INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

The DPFR presented the Internal Audit Service Annual Report for 2020-21. The report was considered by the Audit and Risk Committee at its recent meeting where there was a discussion around the high probability of a cyber-attack and how the College would manage and recover from that.

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED THE INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

121.21 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE 2020-21

The DoG presented the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee 2020-21 which provides a summary of the Committee's activities, the College's Audit arrangement and assurance framework, Internal audit findings 2020/21 And the Financial Statements and Regularity audit findings 2020/21

The DoG advised that this report has been considered by the Audit and Risk Committee and recommended to the Corporation for approval.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020-21

122.21 RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

The DPFR presented the Annual Report on Risk Management for 2020-21 and which provides a summary of the College's risk and control systems, details of the risk register information and an analysis of risk scoring – current, July 2020 and 2021.

The DPFR highlighted the comparison of risks between July 2020 and July 2021 which indicates an increase in the risk profile of the College between July 2020 and July 2021 with an increase in the number of risks and in high category risks pre-mitigation. The increase in the risk profile reflects the risks identified by the College as a result of the pandemic and the heightened awareness of risk management being embedded within the college management team.

The DPFR advised that this report has been considered by the Audi and Risk Committee and recommended to the Corporation for approval.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020-21

123.21 DRAFT RISK STRATEGY

The DPFR presented the Draft Risk Strategy. Extensive work has been done around this which started in the summer with some workshops with both senior staff and the Chair and a member (Dr Eichhorn) of the Audit and Risk Committee. Following on from that Dr Eichhorn had facilitated a session on risk management to senior managers the day before.

Dr Eichhorn then summarised the activities covered in the workshop where senior management in groups looked at risks and opportunities in 2025 and 2030 via scenario planning and other tools with a brief to come back in mid-February with ideas how to become more nimble and agile and add flexibilities to our strategies. Each group will work separately so they come up with different ideas. Following on from the workshop at the end of February it is planned to bring the outcomes to the Board strategy day in March for the Board to agree a strategy.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee advised that as part of this the Board will need to set its risk appetite. She commended the draft documents and thanked the Principal and DPFR for the amazing work they have done on this. In turn the Principal thanked the Chair and Dr Eichhorn for all the work they have done to support with this.

Governors observed that the draft document is really well put together and the Board agreed this is not something

colleges have done before and it shows how far we have come as a college and a Board that is thinking in a very different way.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE PROGRESS MADE WITH THE DRAFT RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

124.21 COLLEGE RISK REGISTER.

The DPFR presented the risk register which shows pre and post mitigation scorings, and the controls in place to mitigate risks using the New Template and dashboard. The DPFR then gave some examples in the register to show how risks are all embedded operationally and strategically

A Governor commended the new template, which is easy to follow, but asked that more clarity is provided around management controls.

A Governor asked whether WFC is an exception re the risk to funding. The Principal advised this was common to all Colleges as there is always uncertainty of and changes to funding. Ideally colleges would like a three-year funding agreement for more effective planning so any lobbying support Governors can provide will be helpful. Another option to addressing this risk is to look at diversifying income which Covid gave us an opportunity to do with the delivery of bespoke short courses.

THE CORPORATION NOTED PROGRESS MADE IN ALL RISK AREAS.

125.21 SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING ON 30 NOVEMBER 2021

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING

126.21 SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE REPORT:

The DoG spoke to the report which covered the:

- Re-appointment of Governor as recommended by the search, governance and remuneration committee
- Call for expression of interest to fill the Health & Safety Champion vacancy
- Adoption of the revised Code of Good Governance as recommended by the search, governance and remuneration committee
- Progress Against the Board Review Action Plan
- List of Governor Training and Attendance at events this term

Governors considered and discussed the various recommendations within the reports

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE:

- **THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF MR ABIDOU FOR A SECOND TERM OF OFFICE OF 4 YEARS WITH EFFECT FROM 16 JANUARY 2022 AS RECOMMENDED BY THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE.**
- **THE ADOPTION OF THE REVISED AOC CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**

NOTE:

- **THE PROGRESS MADE AGAINST THE GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN**
- **GOVERNOR TRAINING AND ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS**

127.21 ANY OTHER ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

Members of Staff left the meeting

128.21 CORPORATION MEMBERS REFLECTIONS ON MEETING

A brief Reflection session on the meeting ensued.

129.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Board Festive Dinner – January 2022 TBC

Strategy Day – Saturday 5th March 2022

Corporation – Tuesday 22 March 2022

20:10 Staff and student members left the meeting ahead of Part 2.

Part 2

Minutes

130.21

131.21

132.21

The meeting closed at 20.20

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