

THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

15 MARCH 2022

MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Youness Abidou	<i>apologies</i>	Member, Vice Chair of the Corporation, Chair of F & R
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 (via Teams)
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 (via Teams)
Vanessa Georgiou	<i>apologies</i>	Student Member
Meghan Muller	<i>apologies</i>	Student Member

CLERK TO THE CORPORATION

Naomi Shoffman	Director of Governance (DoG)
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IN ATTENDANCE

Hassan Rizvi	Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)
Abena Rodman -Tay	Deputy Principal Finance & Resources (DPFR)
Jack McCabe	Director Teaching, Learning & Assessment (DTLA)
Amir Ahmed	Director Services for Students (DSFS)
Shiguftah Gulzar	Welfare and Wellbeing Manager (WWM)
Nadeem Khalifa	Director of BIDU (DBIDU)

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).

08.22 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 member: Mr Abidou – due to connection issues as he was overseas; Ms Muller due to course and Ms Georgiou, due to family commitments. Ms Young gave apologies as she had to leave the meeting early after the Financial reports, due to childcare commitments.

09.22 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mr Taylor reminded the Corporation of his employment with Leyton Orient Trust; a sub-contractor of the College. Mr Douglas reminded the Corporation that he is a Waltham Forest Councillor. The Principal declared an interest in Part 2 item.

10.22 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2021

The Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 14 December 2021, were agreed by the Corporation to be signed by the Chair as a true record.

11.22 MATTERS ARISING

The DoG went through the action list and confirmed that all had been completed in line with the agreed target date. The DPFR confirmed that the Sustainability and Environmental Strategy will be brought to the July meeting.

12.22 ITEM OF URGENT BUSINESS - Boiler Replacement Solution

The Corporation agreed to consider this item of urgent business at this point.

The DPFR spoke to the report which had been circulated earlier that day following a decision by the College's insurance company today and highlighted the following points:

- The College boiler room was flooded in July 2021.
- The College received three boiler replacement options from two suppliers which is shown in the table below.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
supplier	CPW	CPW	ENDEE and Veolia
	Gas fired boilers, installation and works based on 4500Kw output due to the swimming pool.	Gas fire boilers, installation and works based on 3000Kw output without the swimming pool.	Gas fire boilers, installation and works based on 3000Kw without the swimming pool Boilers only - £222k
	£840k	£574k	£320k

- The College also invited two contractors to give initial costings on installing additional solar panels as part of a combined sustainable solution.
- The College insurers have accepted the quotations of ENDEE and Veolia for a like for like replacement which includes a new boiler, Combined Heat and Power (CHP) replacement and some boiler refurbishment cost.
- The Insurers have proposed a draft final settlement fee of £409k including the initial payment of £150k. The College has gone back with a few amendments of the amount due to the additional temporary boiler cost.
- The College would like to appoint ENDEE (option 3) to replace the boilers only and to subsequently replace the CHP with additional solar panels. The CHP was installed many years ago as a means of generating electricity by burning gas which could be used either directly by the College or exported into the grid to generate income. The CHP is very old and redundant and so does not need replacing. This is the most effective solution due to the additional fact that the swimming pool is no longer in operation and therefore the required energy needed is far lower.
- The Insurance company has now agreed a replacement amount of £409k. This is made up of boiler replacement fees of £139k, CHP replacement of £181k and temporary boiler installation and other fees of £89k.
- In conclusion the College recommends that the boilers are replaced at a cost of £222k with the rest of the budget being used to install solar panels instead of CHP replacement

Governors asked about the cheaper cost of the new boiler, life expectancy of the new boiler and whether the insurance premium will go up because of this claim

The DPFR responded that the old boiler was extremely inefficient and expensive to run. The new option will be more efficient, sustainable and cheaper to run. In terms of the Life expectancy of the new boiler this will be capitalised. In terms of replacement, the plan is to reduce carbon footprint by 2050 so we will capitalise this over 10 years. The insurance is covering the costs so there will not be any impact on cashflow, and the balance will be used for the

installations of the solar panels. The insurance premium is likely to go up because of the claim. A Governor commented that it is hard to know which green legislation the government will support as they are finding it hard to agree best renewable energy at this point

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION TO REPLACE THE BOILERS AND TO REPLACE THE CHP WITH SOLAR PANELS.

13.22 PRINCIPAL'S COLLEGE REPORT

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

- The Annual Strategic Discussion Review with ESFA and FEC together with the Chair, Principal, Deputy Principals and DoG was held the previous week. The purpose of the meeting was to review the College's progress and strategy going forward. The feedback from all the reviews will then feed into potential policies. The feedback on the day was really positive. The Principal said she will send Governors the presentation she made to the meeting. The Chair added that the reviewers had described the College as one of their success stories
- Strong recruitment continues on all funding streams, except apprenticeships
- The 16-19 allocation has been received which is higher than last year due to lagged funding; however extra delivery hours on study programmes will be required. The top band will be 580 hours which we aim to deliver. Overall, we should be slightly better on the bottom line. There will be more teaching costs aligned to it. Eng. and maths are priorities for us, along with high needs, mental health and well-being.
- GLA adult growth funding bid – this was submitted in December for this and next year. We have still not had a decision and we are running out of time to deliver it if we get it for this year. We voiced our concerns at the meeting with the ESFA and FEC, around delays in bid decisions and how that is impeding growth.
- Political updates - The Skills Bill will require colleges to have a statutory duty to meet skills needs. This is going through parliament at the moment. Governors will have oversight on how we meet the skills needs.
- This is the third successive year of high student satisfaction and we saw an exceptionally high response rate. This indicates that students feel valued and able to inform the decision making and direction of the college. The Board commended the high response rate.
- The students' conferences have been very well attended. Mental health and wellbeing are still a very high priority and ongoing issue.
- There remain attendance issues, more details of which are in the Curriculum and Quality report.
- The college has been doing a lot of work on the mayors' academies, and has recently joined London First
- Staff recruitment remains an ongoing challenge which is the same across the sector. The general feeling on the recent report published by the AoC is that it understates the ongoing issues. The College has introduced a number of strategies for ongoing recruitment and retention. In particular given the cost of living the College has decided to award a non-consolidated bonus of £500 pro rata for staff. The national UCU is set to launch a pay request of 10%.
- Stakeholder engagement - A summary of recent activities aligned to the College's strategic priority areas is in the report. The College has been asked to lead with the GLA on preparing Londoners for skills and jobs for the future.
- The majority of the Strategic targets are being met. The Principal highlighted that Strategic Goal 5: Estates & Facilities for 21st Century Learning, this is the first full year that energy use is being recorded since Covid. Before that, energy use was not being recorded.
- Members of the EPPWG were invited to give a planning and development update following the recent meetings with Countryside. The Governors discussed the points raised and agreed that we should stick to our strategy, be firm in our approach and keep reinforcing to Country side that no access will be granted until the agreement, which must enshrine all the asks/changes agreed in their letter to us be confirmed. The Chair asked whether the College team has the resources needed. The Principal responded that it does as long as the College continues to have the support of the professional team as Countryside is paying their fees, she emphasised that it is important that Governors are involved in the meetings with Countryside.

A Governor asked about the Board's responsibility with regards to the Skills Bill and what does that mean in practice. The Principal explained this means we may be assessed differently depending on how well we meet the local and regional needs. The partnership work we do, and the growing recruitment is meeting demand and is all aligned to the Council's, GLA's and national growth areas, so it would be difficult to argue that we are not meeting the skills needs.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

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

14.22 FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING ON 3 FEBRUARY 2022

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

15.22 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2020-21 – MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR 31 JANUARY 2022

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

- The year to date financial results show a surplus of £633k compared to year to date budget of £173k resulting in a favourable variance of £460k
- The result shows a year end forecast surplus of £624k surplus compared to the budget of £346k. This is a favourable variance of £279k
- The Financial Health Score is 'Outstanding', and the college is performing well against all the FEC benchmarks
- The Cash balance at 31st January was £9,109k and 84 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 78.

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

The Chair commented on the staffing costs and asked how that impacts on the college in terms of support for learners. The DPFR said the reduction is due to vacant posts both in teaching and support roles that we have not been able to fill due to current recruitment difficulties in the sector; we are using agency cover in the meantime but recruitment across the board is very difficult

THE CORPORATION:

- **RECEIVED AND NOTED THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 JANUARY 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.**

16.22 TUITION FEES POLICY

The DPFR highlighted the key changes to the Tuition policy which reflects 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

17.22 PARTNER SUB-CONTRACTING

The DBIDU spoke to the report and highlighted the following:

- Subcontracted delivery is broadly in line with expectations for this period of the year,
- One contract has been terminated due to under performance, despite us doing everything we could to support the provider. The funding has been reallocated to another provider.
- All other providers, bar one, are currently on track to deliver up to their full allocated contract value,
- The value of one provider's current provision appears lower than expected, but the provider is on track to deliver the full allocation in subsequent periods and this is being monitored on a monthly basis.

A Governor asked whether ending the contact with the sub-contractor should be raised as a risk The BIDU said this was a new provider and so the value awarded was minimal so it's not an issue. There would only be a risk if the contract value could not be met by one of our other existing providers.

A Governor asked what assurance Governors can be given that they need not to be worried about underperforming sub-contractors. Th DBIDU responded that past performance of this provider has been good and also this is a low contract value and we have enough time to take action later on in the year if necessary. The subcontracting performance report is presented to SLT every month and if necessary, action will be taken. The Contract is flexible enough to be able to move the funding around. April is usually the cut off time.

The Chair asked how do we know the sub-contractor student numbers are correct and what percentage of subcontracting is being delivered. The DPFR and DTLA explained the quality processes in place to check the numbers and triangulate the data by the college's central quality team. In terms of percentages sub-contracting accounts for around 10% of the College's provisions against the proposed threshold 25%. The Principal said that the College subcontracts for clear intent reasons, so we are not likely to ever stop sub-contracting as this is meeting the needs of different pockets of the community as well as niche specialisms.

THE CORPORATION:

- **NOTED THE CURRENT SUBCONTRACTED ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR 2021/2022 INCLUDING THE CHANGE IN ONE CONTRACT VALUE AND TERMINATION OF ANOTHER CONTRACT •**
- **NOTED THAT THE PROPORTION OF SUBCONTRACTED ACTIVITY BETWEEN PROVIDERS MAY VARY ACCORDING TO STAKEHOLDER DEMAND BUT IS UNLIKELY TO INCREASE IN ITS OVERALL VALUE FOR THE YEAR.**
- **NOTED THE MECHANISMS USED BY THE COLLEGE TO MONITOR AND SUPPORT THE QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE OF ALL SUBCONTRACTED ACTIVITIES.**

18.22 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING ON 10 FEBRUARY 2022

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

19.22 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY REPORT

The DPCQ introduced the report which provides an update on College performance for Term 2 of 2021/22 and ongoing actions. He highlighted progress against key performance indicators including:

- Retention
- Attendance
- Learner Satisfaction rates
- GCSE November 2021 resits and pass rates

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

A discussion ensued around attendance and the associated risks. It was noted that attendance has gone up which demonstrated the interventions that have been introduced have had impact. The DPCQ reiterated the interventions being used to engage absent learners. The issue is a few absences among many learners, due to work childcare commitments and illness.

A Governor asked whether there is there anything the Board can do in terms of lobbying. The DPCQ responded that the problem is across the board both with adults and young people and other education institution are having the same issues and discussions around what else can be done

A Governor said she had been involved in some research around ways to motivate students and that she would send SLT the outcomes and recommended actions from this project to see if any of it could be applied by the college.

Governors then discussed how much effort is too much to invest in attendance given all colleges doing are facing the same problem and is conscious of the amount of time, resource and energy the college is putting into this area. The Principal said that to put it into context there is still a really clear correlation between attendance and achievement and so the focus on improving attendance and engagement does need to continue

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

20.22 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

The DSfS and WWM 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 which demonstrated the impact of staff safeguarding training
- 55.5% of referrals are linked to non-safeguarding
- The breakdown of all the safeguarding concerns and key categories and headlines.
- The College has updated its live PREVENT action plan.
- A lot of positive work is being done by the College around Mental health. The College has accelerated its plans to further promote good mental health, supporting learners to feel empowered and resilient to cope with life demands and has signed up to the Association of Colleges' Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter and trained staff and students.
- Measures put in place around intervention for students' safety and security as requested by students
- The Staff training that has been delivered during term including the recently added InCel
- The College has developed a standalone Harmful Sexual Abuse Policy that provides staff with a clear set of guidance that supports a zero-tolerance culture, where sexual harassment and sexual violence is not tolerated.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

21.22 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING ON 14 MARCH 2022

The Chair of the Committee provided a verbal report on the meeting. The Committee had considered four Internal Audit reports, the Erasmus audit, FOI log, along with the Policies and risk register on this agenda

The Committee agreed at the meeting to advise the Board that they raised concerns over the Cyber Security Internal Audit Report in the sense of it being graded 'strong' assurance. Given the climate we are in, the Committee believed that in order to not lose sight of it, that this area should be reviewed more frequently than other areas with the same assurance rating. If the Corporation is happy to review this in the near future, then the Committee suggest using a different scope. The Board agreed this was a sensible course of action.

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

22.22 RESERVES POLICY

The Corporation considered the changes from the last approved version of the Reserves policy

The policy had been fully scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Committee who had recommended it for approval. A discussion ensued around how the reserves figure is derived. The DPFR said that the amount should cover operating and pay costs for 3 months.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE RESERVES POLICY SUBJECT TO THE RESERVES POSITION BEING REVIEWED BY THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE AT ITS JUNE MEETING

23.22 PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ('WHISTLEBLOWING') PROCEDURE

The Corporation considered the changes from the last approved version of the Public Interest Disclosure Procedure. The procedure had been fully scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Committee who had recommended it for approval.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ('WHISTLEBLOWING') PROCEDURE

24.22 COLLEGE RISK REGISTER.

The DPFR 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:

- **1 Change in policy:** Assessing the impact of changes in government policy on funding rates and delivery hours.

- **3 Diversification of Income:** Successful Mayors Academies Programme hub funding in collaboration with other London Colleges.
- **8 Planning:** New Business planning tool developed for 2022/23 incorporating operational risk register.
- **9 Finance:** College has applied for increase in GLA Adult funding allocation for 2021/22 and 2023. Increase in prices of oil and gas, impact on staff & student well-being as a result of Russia invasion of Ukraine
- **11 ICT:** Working with JISC on various projects to strengthen College Cyber security.
- **13 COVID 19 impact:** College risk assessments have been updated in line with recent Government guidelines. Impact on staff sickness, staff recruitment and student achievements.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee advised that at their meeting the Committee had discussed how the risk register can be used in a proactive way.

THE CORPORATION NOTED PROGRESS MADE IN ALL RISK AREAS.

25.22 SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING ON 9 MARCH 2022

The Corporation was advised that the Committee had discussed the succession planning arrangements for when the Chair stepped down. It had been previously agreed that the Chair would step down in July 2022 and the Chair designate would shadow him for the six months leading up to then. Due to work commitments of both members this arrangement has not been possible.

It was agreed therefore to recommend to the Corporation that the whole process be delayed by a year to allow a smooth handover from September 2022 and to ensure the continuity and stability of the College in view of there being a very new SLT in place. Mr Butler agreed he would be happy to stay on for an extra year, if the proposal is approved, to support the College, SLT and the handover process.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- APPROVE THE UPDATED SUCCESSION PLAN
- EXTEND MR BUTLER'S APPOINTMENT AS GOVERNOR AND CHAIR OF THE CORPORATION BE EXTENDED TO 31 JULY 2023 TO ACCOMMODATE THE UPDATED SUCCESSION PLAN.
- NOTE THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING ON 9 MARCH 2022

26.22 APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR

Members of the Committee provided some background to recruitment, selection and recommendation for the appointment of new governor.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MR AMIR SEYYAD FOR AN INITIAL ONE YEAR TERM OF OFFICE AS RECOMMENDED BY THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE.

27.22 PROGRESS AGAINST THE BOARD REVIEW ACTION PLAN

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED AND NOTED THE PROGRESS MADE AGAINST THE GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN

28.22 ANY OTHER ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

29.22 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Corporation – Tuesday 12 July 2022

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

Part 2

Minutes

30.22

31.22

32.22

The meeting closed at 21.25

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