



## THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

28 SEPTEMBER 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	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Michael Eichhorn	present	Member (via Teams)
Janet Gardner	present	Member, Principal & Chief Executive Member
Andrew Hall	present	Member
Susannah Hume	present	Member
Alison Morris	present	Member Vice Chair of the Corporation, Chair of C & Q, Careers Champion
Renatta Nzomono	present	Member, Chair of A & R, (Via Teams)
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 Rivzi	Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)
Abena Rodman -Tay	Deputy Principal Finance & Resources (DPFR)
Amir Ahmed	Director Services for Students (DSfS)
Nadeem Khalifa	Director of BIP (DoBIP)
Stella Hawkins	Director of Curriculum (DoC)
John Newton	Director of Curriculum (DoC)
Susanne Datta	Director of HR & Organisational Development (DoHROD)
James Russell	Director of MIS and Planning

**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).**

#### **84.21 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- The Chair welcomed all to this first meeting in person since the pandemic. He conveyed his thanks to Frank Royle staff Governor whose term of office had ended before this meeting and so was not present. The Chair commended Mr Royle's commitment as staff Governor who had recorded 100% attendance throughout his 4-year tenure. It was agreed to invite Mr Royle to the Board's Christmas dinner to thank him in person.
- Apologies were received from the following members: Paul Douglas who is on holiday, Jacqueline Young due to illness. Nadia Ahmed has been granted a leave of absence until November due to ill health.

#### **85.21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Neil Taylor reminded the Corporation of his employment with Leyton Orient Trust; a sub-contractor of the College. It was agreed that Mr Taylor would withdraw from the meeting for the reports recorded at minute 91.21.

The members of the Corporation confirmed that there were no other items on the agenda for the meeting in which they had a personal interest.

#### **86.21 MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY, 23 JULY (Part 2) AND 6 SEPTEMBER 2021(Part 2)**

The Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 20 July, 23 July (Part 2) and 6 September 2021(Part 2), were agreed by the Corporation to be signed by the Chair as a true record, subject to the correction of several typos and attendance list.

#### **87.21 MATTERS ARISING**

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

#### **88.21 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:

- Covid guidance is changing constantly which the College is keeping on top of; as of today, there have been only 3 positive cases - 2 staff and 1 student.
- FEC visit – The college is delighted to have been given the final sign off. The Report that was sent in the summer break is in attached in the board pack. Key strengths highlighted in the report were Leadership and governance.
- Further to this sign off from FEC the College has received confirmation that it is out of intervention
- The new Education minister is making himself visible and is regarded as a positive appointment. His remit has been broadened
- Included in the board pack are some reports and responses to the funding and accountability consultation.
- Portsmouth University - the council has confirmed the partnership and the university will be opening a campus in the borough with a lot of money being invested. We will continue to work with them as there could be a risk to our L3 and L4 provision. We have already had a couple of meetings already with them and the DP C&Q has been meeting with his counterparts. These have been Positive meetings. The College is continuing to work with London Met, and we will come back to the Board when there is more on that.
- The achievement rates show a positive step forward, there has been a lot of impact and we are exceeding national provider rates. There is more about this in the Curriculum and Quality report and the DPCQ has been key in driving this.
- World skills - The College was one of only (and only London college) 12 chosen. Support and upskilling will be provided for Teaching and Learning to produce world class learners and a world class workforce.
- Colleges are being encouraged to collaborate more with others. WFC is working with a number of organisations on several bids.
- People and culture – the report lists what is being done to improve the workforce and morale. WFC is pleased to be in a position to make a one-off bonus for staff.
- Subject to approval today we will publish the equality pay gap report. There is further work to do with protected

characteristics. WE will be only the second college to publish.

- Financial KPI's – it is worth noting the movement and positive outturn and that WFC met 5 of 6 new FEC KPIs which is an improvement from only meeting 2 last year. The last one is staff to pay ratio. Part of that is down to strong financial management but we were also fortunate to receive additional and in year growth funding. It will be more challenging this year, but we are starting off on a better footing. Governors agreed that this measure may not be achievable and that we need to meet the needs of the college as long as other financial KPIs are met.
- Learner recruitment is going well so far and have met allocation for 16-19 but still lots of movement and will take until half term to settle numbers.
- The Pro solution and HR systems are 2 large system upgrading projects planned and agreed for this year and are being implemented across the year and will be completed by the end of this academic year.
- Capital project – At the July Board stage 2 of the capital project was discussed. Further to that, the college's financial position has greatly improved since the stage 1 bid at the start of the last academic year, and the expectation is that the college will make some contribution to match funding. Therefore, we are proposing for stage 2 to now offer matched funding of 5% which we were not in position to do initially. It is planned to have a discussion with the Chair and Vice Chair and then produce a paper on this proposal and the implications, to be circulated for approval to all the Board. The bid is £20m for the two projects and we propose offering £1m match. It was agreed to circulate the paper within a couple of days and for Governors to respond by Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021. A Governor asked for the paper to include the assessment criteria. A Governor asked how realistic 50% matched funding would be for colleges, the Principal said a few could do so as they have those sorts of reserves, but the likelihood is that the majority will be matching less than this, depending on the size of their projects.

A Governor commended the positive progress highlighted within the report and reiterated the need for the Board to support the senior team.

There was discussion with Governors around growth and market share. There is a Marketing drive to work with stakeholders. Also, in terms of recruitment, young learners are the best advocates for the college. It is looking like progressing students is an improving picture in certain curriculum areas such as construction MV engineering. There are key areas of growth and some have yet to meet the targets. STEM related courses are showing good growth.

The Chair asked whether the college is seen as a safe environment regarding covid and the Principal said that throughout the pandemic students have fed back that they have felt very well supported and by keeping the college open, this has really helped. Staff have been key to agreeing the arrangements in place to help keep the college safe and the staff survey demonstrated that more staff felt safe even in covid that they did in the previous survey pre covid.

A Governor asked re the collaborative bid whether we have capacity within the college. The Principal said she has strengthened the team with the recent appointment of the Director of MIS and Planning as well as appointing a strategic project manager, who is supporting the senior team with some bids and strategic projects just discussed. We are not bidding for everything as the projects need to fit our business model but equally, we don't want to miss opportunities and also not be distracted from our core business.

The Chair asked whether the staff ratio target is realistic. The Principal explained that if all the other KPIs are fine then it does not have too much impact, but we need to keep an eye on it. The DPFR added that the target is not feasible in the short term.

The Chair noted that this had been an unusual year, and the Principal explained that many of the national benchmarks used are still from 2018/19 as they were the last to be published.

A Governor asked about the recommendation as per page 7 of the FEC Diagnostic report to implement actions to address the HE recruitment challenges. The Principal explained that this decline was because the college did not achieve OFS registration a couple of years ago and so and does not deliver HE. One of the actions going forward is to try and develop this provision with franchises with London Met and Portsmouth Universities; both of which are underway; the partnership with London Met is making good progress and validation decisions are expected shortly. The Governor said that he had a few other queries and suggestions in respect of the Diagnostic report recommendation to implement a

programme of formal stress testing of future forecasts to provide additional robustness to this financial planning – which he would follow up with the Principal and DPCR outside the meeting.

#### **THE CORPORATION**

- **NOTED THE VERY GOOD PROGRESS AGAINST QUALITY KPIS FOR 2020/21**
- **NOTED THE EXCELLENT PROGRESS AGAINST FINANCIAL KPIS FOR 2020/21**
- **NOTED REMOVAL OF INTERVENTION FROM FEC AND ESFA**

#### **89.21 UPDATE ON CURRICULUM AND QUALITY**

The DPCR spoke to the Curriculum and Quality Report and QIP and highlighted the following:

- The overall achievement currently stands at 81.32% with projected achievement between 84%-88% compared to final outcome of 83.7% for 2019/20. Achievement for 16-18 is at 84.5% (78.8% for 2019/20). The predicted achievement for 19+ is between at 86.2%-90% compared to 86.2% for 2019/20. All areas are significantly improved and have reversed the previous 3 year declining trend
- Overall Apprenticeships achievements is at 76.5% which is in line with 2019-20 and 9.8% above the PR. The range predicted for overall outcomes is 74%-78%. Timely achievements are currently at 21.3%, significantly below the previous year's outcome and PR. This is due to the delays caused by Pandemic which did not allow providers to book End Point Assessments (EPAs) in a timely manner. It is noted that the delays caused are a wider issue affecting providers and apprentices on a national scale.
- GCSE English pass rates (9-4) for all ages have increased to 54.2% (PR 2018-19 – 25.3%) from 33.3% in 2019-20. This is an improvement of 20.9%.
- GCSE Maths pass rates (9-4) for all ages have increased to 61.6% (PR 2018-19 – 20.7%) from 39.6% in 2019-20. This is an improvement of 22.0%.
- The overall attendance of the college in 2020-21 is at 86.6 which is 3.44% better than 2019-20 at 83.16%. Vocational attendance for the academic year is at 87.47% and English and maths at 77% and 74.5% respectively. This is a combination of face to face and remote learning. Attendance for English and maths has been challenging particularly with Covid-19 restrictions on face to face learning and lockdown. However, this does not include the attendance to workshops and formative and summative assessment (vocational and English and maths) sessions, especially on English and maths where students' attendance has been much higher since they returned from the lockdown in March 2020.
- Retention is at 96.9%
- 85% of learners completed placement hours for work experience
- There has been a 13.8% overall increase in study programme enrolments in comparison to the previous year, so far. However, two of these areas are still awaiting 80 outcomes between them.
- The outcomes for GCSE English and maths have seen significant improvement in 2020-21. GCSE results were based on Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) for the second year running. It is noted that the outcomes are significantly high, and actions will be put in place to match these outcomes in 2021-22, in any post Centre Assessed Grade scenario.
- In 2021-22, the Functional Skills (FS) Level-2 provision will be offered to students based on their prior attainment and initial assessment to ascertain their suitability for GCSE or FS. It is likely that more students will be enrolled for GCSE instead of Functional Skills Level-2, due to higher GCSE pass rate in 2020-21, hence, the increased number of Grade-3 students will also be re-enrolled on GCSE and require additional support while presenting even bigger a challenge so we will need to mitigate the risks given that students have had 2 years of not having any exams.
- During the academic year 2020-21 the College received a total of 23 complaints. 23 (100%) respondents met the 14-working day target response time in 2020-21. The College benefits from increased use of the information gained from compliments and complaints to consolidate and improve service delivery to all stakeholders. Moving the administration of the complaints process from Curriculum Administration to the Principalship Office has significantly improved our complaint response time to 100% responded to within 14 working days from 72% in 2019-20. The Principal commended her Executive Coordinator, who is also the complaints officer, who had effectively dealt with all the complaints and which were all completed in a timely manner

The Chair asked whether there are concerns for this year for the courses that will no longer be centre assessed. The DPCR said it will be a challenging this year as there will be a significantly higher number of learners sitting exams. There

are actions being taken to address this for instance grouping learners according to grade increase in re-sits and providing extra support.

A Governor asked if the team feels these results are reflective of students' performance. THE DPCQ explained how the criteria was applied, in a limited scope and limited syllabus. Students did not have to go through the whole syllabus, and they were applying what the learners had achieved early on to the rest of the year's performance. A Governor asked whether the teaching was focused on just 4 modules? The DPCQ said that the learning was front loaded, and tutors had a lot more evidence and assessments available which made the processing of TAGs easier this year compared to the previous year.

A Governor commented that it will be really hard to achieve the same high results next year as students will not be used to exams, but it is good to aim for this. She asked if it works to group students by attainment as she would encourage a broader assessment. The DPCQ reiterated that learners would not be grouped by ability but based on initial and diagnostic assessments and qualification to be studied.

A Governor commended the very positive information and data in the report and asked the DPCQ what did he think the final outcome for adults will be. He responded that he was confident their achievement will end up at 90% as this has been monitored robustly through achievement boards

A Governor asked with STEM how much of a worry are the results – The DPCQ said that the College is still awaiting the final formal assessments which are coming through. The staff governor said that all learners have achieved but not yet received confirmation as there have been lots of delays with one particularly awarding body, but they are just awaiting certification. There followed a general discussion around the samples and checking and at what point might a student appeal against their grades.

A Governor asked about retention and whether this could be higher due to Covid conditions and if so is this likely to drop when normal onsite teaching resumes. The Principal responded that Governors should bear in mind that the retention figures were higher in the previous year but not necessarily a true reflection of where the college was, this year the tracking has been improved and continues to be further improved which should continue to reduce the gap between retention and achievement.

A Governor asked about enrolment and what effect has the apprenticeship rates had on raising the profile of work experience. The DPCQ explained that the college has a plan for delivery of Work Experience with an aim to frontload. It has also expanded its database of employers. This is a standard agenda item at all performance boards, and we are seeing a cultural shift in terms of tutors taking ownership of the whole study programme. The DSfS said that the aim is to ensure all students have access to external meaningful work placements. During covid WFC asked organisations to provide digital placements, which they did, so learners were working on projects such as designing websites. However, this year it is planned for all SP learners to complete external work experience.

A Governor asked whether we are seeing more young people enrol as there are not enough apprenticeships. The Principal said she was not sure yet as more data is needed but if anything, more young people are going into employment but not necessary through apprenticeships.

A Governor asked what proportion of work experience comes from the learners' own contacts. The DSfS said that it is very low, but the team is looking into that. It is important to remember that many of our students do not have the social capital in their home lives to be able to make those connections or introductions to afford work experience opportunities and so the college needs to support those who are unable to do so. Therefore, whilst we should aim to leverage any connections students or their families may have in regard to work experience, it would be unfair to put a target on it as it may disadvantage some students. A couple of the Governors said they had some contacts they could pass on who may be able to offer work experience placements.

The Chair concluded the discussion saying that the Board recognises and acknowledges the dramatic transformation of the teaching and learning and assessments and appreciates all the hard work that has gone into this.

## **THE CORPORATION**

- **NOTED THE very GOOD PROGRESS IN THE MAJORITY OF THE ASPECTS OF CURRICULUM AND QUALITY**
- **NOTED THE PROGRESS MADE AND APPROVED THE UPDATED QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

### **90.21 SAFEGUARDING/PREVENT**

The DSfS presented the Annual report on Safeguarding 2020-21 and highlighted the following points:

- The College has received a total of 649 safeguarding referrals which is an overall increase of 26% compared to the comparative position the previous year and much of the increase has been due to increased referrals from external agencies and suggests effective partner working and that staff have been very mindful of safeguarding.
- The 649 safeguarding referrals are linked to 395 unique learners and the top 3 referral categories are Mental Health (14%), Criminal Convictions (10%) and Domestic Abuse (8%). The Mental health and domestic abuse data align with the national picture.
- Overall 33% of referrals are now coming through multiple agencies where welfare and wellbeing actions have been undertaken, that has mitigated the threshold for an emerging safeguarding concern - this was 16% in 2019/20.
- The local authority Safeguarding in Education Team has undertaken a review on harmful sexual behaviour for all education providers, providing an audit tool to help establish and determine the College's response to harmful sexual behaviour and trauma informed practice.
- The outcome of the review was positive, and the Safeguarding in Education Team agreed with the overall rating of Waltham Forest College being grade 1 in all areas, covered in the S11 audit.
- The Staff training aspiration is 100% completion; However, there are some staff on long-term sick leave and those on maternity leave who are included in the compliance rates reported above, that means 100% compliance is not always achievable. It is currently on 98% as it includes long term sickness and maternity leave, but all staff currently here have 100% compliance on completion.

Governors asked that governors safeguarding training be included in the report so they can ensure 100% compliance at all times with Governors too.

## **THE CORPORATION NOTED THE ANNUAL REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING 2020-21**

### **91.21. SUBCONTRACTING UPDATE**

i. The DoBIP presented the update on subcontracted provision summarising the subcontracted providers and the rationale for contracting with each of them and how this meets the curriculum intent. The college has supported subcontracted providers with ensuring training venues are safe by applying the same standards of Covid-19 testing and health and safety risk assessments as the College's mainstream campus. As previously reported, the college already meets the requirements of the proposed 25% cap on subcontracting due to be enforced from the year 2022 to 2023 and is below this threshold, and there are no plans to increase the level of subcontracting.

The Chair asked whether there is a target for subcontracting – the Principal advised that the college decides on subcontracting due to community needs and specialisms they can provide. There is not a target, but a threshold set from the ESFA to reduce the amount of subcontracting. The College's strategy is to reduce subcontracting and grow in house delivery. She explained the rationale for this for benefit of new governors. A Governor commented that the margins seem lower for one of the subcontractors, at 15%, and the Principal responded that this is a legacy contract with carryover learners which will be reviewed when the contracts comes to an end.

ii. The DoBIP presented the update on Business Innovation and Partnerships Direct Delivery. The college continues to develop provision even when others couldn't by utilising its agency model which allows the college to be very responsive and reactive when a short-term need comes up by being able to source and deploy highly qualified staff to deliver specialist provision as required. The model provides higher contribution levels than other courses. The FEC praised the model and innovation. There is an identified high demand for Railway provision, which the college intends to deliver directly rather than through a subcontractor as it has done historically.

The Chair asked about and the DoBIP explained the processes for staff delivering the short-term courses which are all exactly the same as for permanent members of staff.

A Governor pointed out that the projected value of contribution of the GLA-AEB in table 1 should be £250,000 not £328,000. This will be corrected.

A Governor asked how the College identifies the demand -the Principal said through employers, LMI, emerging markets, council, DWP, Local London, Chamber of Commerce for instance we have delivered bespoke training green technologies, traditional trade with transferable skills. In terms of pipeline supply there are a number of ways to get that intelligence. She then gave some examples of how this works and how we are mitigating risk through employers covering a lot of the upfront costs.

## **THE CORPORATION NOTED THE UPDATES ON SUBCONTRACTING AND BUSINESS INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIPS DIRECT DELIVERY**

### **93.21 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2020-21 – MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR 31 JULY 2021**

The DPFR spoke to the Management Accounts to 31 July 2021 She then highlighted the key points:

- The draft result shows a surplus of £1,970k.
- The draft Financial Health Score is 'Outstanding'.
- The Cash balance at 31st July was £7,042k and 122 cash days, against the College 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 111.
- Further adjustments from the current position to the year-end result will arise from any clawback identified through on-going funding audits or R14 submission, the annual pension valuation adjustment, the staff holiday accrual, provision for bad debt and any further ad hoc invoice accruals.
- There was no GLA Clawback as AEB delivery was over 90%. Therefore, the provision of £403k for 5% clawback has been released
- The VAT provision turned out to be a refund rather than liability.
- All the KPI's are being met other than Pay as a percentage of income which is (excl redundancy costs) 66.87% as at 31st July 2021 compared to a forecast cost of 66.98%. This is 1.87% above the FEC target of 65%.
- The College finances remains securely within the terms of the bank covenant.
- The financial indicators demonstrate that the College has significantly improved its cash position and solvency by strengthening performance through a closer scrutiny of staffing and non-pay costs, and closer monitoring of income.

The Chair of Finance and Resources Committee clarified and was assured that the debt service cover meets the bank covenant criterion. He went on to commend the tremendous year the College has had. Finance has always been an issue, so this is the first year the College is starting in a strong position. That is not to say the struggle is over and we must manage the finances robustly. Contribution and the bottom line must always be at the forefront of all activity.

A Governor reiterated the need to keep costs down on expense lines. The Principal explained that some of this is down to pension legacy issues and that SLT is going to start again looking at the savings tracker as we are starting from a lowed base this year. The Principal also highlighted potential pressures on costs this year as costs have risen by up to 30% for example in construction materials for the curriculum area, have increased considerably in recent months since the budget was set so the team are working to find savings elsewhere, but Governors should be aware of emerging pressures linked to external drivers including pressure to increase salaries on recruitment.

A Governor said that the paper touches on different provisions. It may be helpful for the Finance and Resources Committee to get an overview/breakdown of all current provisions and how we assess these provisions looking forward

(e.g. likelihood, potential changes in materiality). For individual provisions, in particular pension provisions, it may be worthwhile to discuss again how other colleges and lobby groups currently deal with it.

#### **THE CORPORATION:**

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

#### **94.21 COLLEGE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The DPFR advised that the changes are highlighted as per pages 1-5 the key changes are around Capital expenditure, Authorisation of Requisitions and Orders, Purchasing Arrangements and Tenders for the Supply of Goods and Services

A Governor asked whether the £50k threshold for going to Formal tender was restrictive. The DPFR said it's a starting point and that sector wide its common practice. The Principal explained that the College is using TENET to procure across the board on procurement as this is a more robust process. She also felt that until the college is in a more mature position with procurement, she and the DPFR had agreed to cap at £50k and could then review as the processes becomes more embedded over time.

A Governor asked whether there is a dip in terms of procurement. DPFR responded that SLT drills down and looks at all contracts and whether KPIs are met in the contracts and has cancelled some where the KPIs have not been achieved. Working through TENET helps drive down costs and provides more value for money.

#### **THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE REVISED COLLEGE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR 2021-22**

#### **95.21 REVIEW OF RISK REGISTER**

The DPFR presented the updated risk register. She highlighted the following:

- The risk around the cost of the temporary boilers at £20k a month. The College is currently negotiating with the insurance company to reclaim that.
- Potential pension liability – The internal Audit Service plan to carry out a pensions audit
- Impact of Brexit e.g. fuel shortages, supply chain issues, increase in costs
- The NI increase will impact next year at a cost of £70k p.a.

A Governor asked how the risks are assessed as she thinks some of the risks are actually lower than the higher rating indicated on the risk register. The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee advised that the whole Risk Register is due to be amended, as part of a full review of the board assurance framework which a group of governors and senior managers is working on offline

A Governor suggested adding a graphical representation of the risk register. Specifically, a graph in a bar chart form that ranks the individual risks based on their residual risk post mitigation. The latter is already a column 13 of the current risk register. So, it may be a "quick win". It would allow us to highlight the biggest risks in one chart and also discuss which of these risks could coincide (to form a "perfect storm") and which are mutually exclusive/non additive.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee advised that this report will come back in December. She confirmed that with the new risks identified she was comfortable with the mitigating actions and suggested looking as well whether they have an impact on other risks.

#### **THE CORPORATION NOTED THE RISK REGISTER AND THE MITIGATING ACTIONS BEING TAKEN**

#### **96.21 DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY.**

The DPFR presented the Draft Green and Sustainability Strategy and highlighted the following points:

- The College's Sustainability and Environmental Strategy sits alongside the Estates Strategy with an action plan.

- This strategy details the College's commitment in ensuring that its impact on the environment both locally and globally is minimised. This will be achieved through different initiatives as detailed in the action plan attached.
- The College has set-up a Sustainability Action Group and a Students' Sustainability Champions group to help facilitate this.

A Governor (AH) advised that he could share some information from a college in Canada which has implemented such a strategy, which the college who may find it useful. After some discussion around the topic the Chair asked, and AH agreed to be the lead Governor on sustainability.

A Governor suggested that it would be helpful to have the action plan shown in a graphical representation in a project plan format, e.g. as a Gantt chart. This would provide a chronological order and allow us to track the completion of plan going forward.

## **THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY**

### **97.21 GDPR ANNUAL REPORT**

The DPFR presented the GDPR Annual Report which has been prepared for the first time, in response to an internal audit recommendation to report back on GDPR Monitoring. The DPFR summarised the report and added that:

- The GDPR officer is arranging refresher training across the college
- A multi-factor authentication (MFA) system was implemented in September 2020 to help prevent cyber-attacks. This works by periodically triggering a phone call or app approval via a smart phone to staff personal mobile when staff connect from outside college to validate their identity.
- As part of the MFA rollout cyber training was given to all staff.

## **THE CORPORATION NOTED GDPR ANNUAL REPORT**

### **98.21 H.R. ANNUAL REPORT AND ETHNICITY PAY GAP REPORT**

The DoHR presented the Annual H.R. report and highlighted the following points:

- Workforce - Our aim is for our workforce to reflect the makeup of the local community. The total proportion of staff employed from a BAME background (Black, Asian or Mixed) is at 47.70%. This is 5.7% above the borough and 7.5% above London. Within the context of the London figure for the BAME population being 40.2% The proportion of managers and SLT from a BAME background is over 50%. 13% of the workforce are casual workers - mainly enrolments and invigilators.
- The Staff turnover and absence rates compared to sector (2018-19) and UK average rates. More recent sector rates are not available for comparison. However, this is not comparing like for like as it is old data and there have been a lot of changes in the sector.
- The overall proportion of staff declaring a disability is below the norm for the average FE sector (and also below the general UK workforce. Disability is not captured that well so the College will take this forward to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusive committee to improve the level of staff disclosure for any of the protected characteristics such as disability.
- Gender - 65% of employees are Female and 35% of employees are Male. This is comparable with the FE college norm of 61% female employees. The new HR system has the option to select 'Other' in addition to Male and Female.
- The EAP staff survey was the first carried out in two years and the response rate was 64% which was higher than previous years and with improved ratings in 11 key areas by up to around 40% compared to the previous survey. This year all staff were surveyed excluding casual workers and the survey incorporated Ofsted questions. In some areas there were some very positive messages arising out of the staff survey, demonstrating that our staff feel our safeguarding arrangements are effective, that the College supports equal opportunities for all, and staff are clear about their own roles in achieving our plans and strong communication across the organisation.
- In many of the areas we ranked in the upper quartile and above the external average. Whilst there are still areas to continue to improve, for which an action plan had been put in place, it is worth noting the considerable distance travelled since the previous survey.
- New management strategies will be introduced when the new HR and Payroll system is implemented in November

2021. The College has a legacy system that is no longer supported by the provider, and the HR and Payroll platforms are disconnected systems with manual and electronic counterparts. The department are using spreadsheets, and paper documents to organise employee information, pension returns and communicate schedules for performance management.

A Governor asked whether the female/ male split is usual for the FE sector and the DoHR confirmed this was the case.

A Governor expressed concern at the low level of disability declaration. The Principal said she was not sure whether it's because people don't see themselves as disabled or if it is how the question is phrased, and advised we would be looking for ways to improve how we capture

A Governor asked if there were issues around pay satisfaction. The Principal said that there had been Lots of feedback from staff re pay, which the senior team is looking at ways to address, and which needs a wider workforce review. Recruitment is very competitive with salaries which makes it increasingly difficult to recruit. The DoHR said she has implemented a market forces strategy. There followed a brief discussion around rewards and benefits.

The DoHR presented the Ethnicity Pay Gap Report and highlighted the following points:

- This report is based on data from June 2021, which shows the College's mean ethnicity pay gap is 2.81%. This is based on a disclosure rate of 99% of staff who have shared their ethnicity with the College.
- The data highlights there are consistent levels of pay equality at the College between colleagues who identify as being from a Black, Asian or other ethnic minority (BAME) group however, the balance of BAME and Non BAME colleagues at different pay grades has resulted in a gap.
- Ethnicity pay gap is 2.81% because of a discrete pocket of staff in a certain area mean hourly pay equal in all 4 quartiles
- The SLT profile is 62.5% BAME and governors and managers BAME representation is consistently above the sector.
- As with any data of this kind, the headlines only tell us so much. Our analysis shows that when we look specifically at colleagues identifying as Black, Asian, Mixed; and Other, 62.50% are representative at senior levels which is well above the average of 6%.
- We acknowledge there is still work for us to do. We have identified that representation and distribution of BAME staff across our grading structure and job types are factors that influence the ethnicity pay gap. With that in mind we have excellent community links with networks to support both our students and staff in creating a more equal, diverse and inclusive College by driving change through professional leadership and management practices.
- It is likely that publication of this data will be a statutory requirement in 2023.

#### **THE CORPORATION**

- **APPROVED THE ETHNICITY PAY GAP REPORT FOR WEBSITE PUBLICATION.**
- **NOTED THE WORKFORCE AND COMPOSITION DATA AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021.**
- **NOTED THE IDENTIFIED CHANGES AND PRIORITIES REQUIRED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COLLEGE**

#### **99.21 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT**

The DPFR spoke to the report which provides a summary of the Health and Safety performance for the academic year 2020/21 including COVID 19 plans, internal audits, incidents and accidents and the work of the Health and Safety Committee. She highlighted the following points:

- The number of reported accidents decreased from a total of 17 in 2019-20 to 6 for 2020/21. It is recognised that this reduction is likely to reflect lower attendance levels due to COVID-19.
- In-house health and safety training were received by many staff including first aid, fire marshal, risk assessment, basics of health and safety, fire safety awareness and the use of display screen equipment.
- Personal workplace risk assessments were undertaken for staff where it was identified by Human Resources or the College occupational health provider that they were necessary.
- Documented health and safety procedures were reviewed and where necessary new procedures were introduced.
- COVID-19 significantly impacted the College with significant resources required to enable students and staff to attend College with requisite COVID-19 controls in place.

- Staff and students were regularly updated COVID-19 controls measures and made aware of to whom to seek guidance or assistance from if they had concerns about their work, learning or wellbeing.
- An internal health and safety audit by Wylie and Bisset concluded “Through our review, we can provide a substantial level of assurance regarding the controls in place for Health and Safety at Waltham Forest College”.

#### **THE CORPORATION**

- **NOTED THE CONTENTS THIS REPORT**
- **NOTED THE KEY RISKS BEING MANAGED BY THE COLLEGE AND ACTIONS TAKEN**

#### **100.21 GOVERNANCE REPORT**

The DoG spoke to the report which provides Corporation Members with an update on various governance matters.

Having considered and discussed the various documents and recommendations within the reports **THE CORPORATION**

#### **APPROVED:**

- **THE REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND THE ESTATES, PROPERTY AND PLANNING WORKING GROUP (EPPWG)**
- **THE APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT ADVISER TO THE EPPWG**

#### **NOTED:**

- **THE PROCESS FOR STAFF GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT**
- **THE ATTENDANCE OF GOVERNORS AT MEETINGS DURING 2020/21**
- **THE TRAINING UNDERTAKEN BY GOVERNORS 2020-21**
- **WHETHER TO COMPLETE THE FE WORKFORCE GOVERNOR DATA COLLECTION FOR FE AND SIXTH-FORM COLLEGES FOR 2020/21**
- **THE PROGRESS MADE AGAINST THE GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN**

#### **101.21 ANY OTHER ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair said he was extremely pleased with the performance and thanked the Principal and the Senior team, acknowledging their hard work and continued and valuable commitment to the College.

Governors were also thanked, including their noticeable engagement with the Senior Team and encouraged to attend events and be more visible.

The Chair advised that he will be arrange a 1-2-1 with each governor after half term

A brief Reflection on the meeting session ensued

*21:15 AC/AR-T/HR/JN/SH/AA/NK/SD/JR left the meeting*

#### **102.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

*The meeting closed at 21.30*

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