

THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2017

MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Youness Abidou	present	Member
Steve Besley	present	Member
Paul Butler	present	Member, Chair of the Corporation and Safeguarding Champion
Alison Morris	present	Member
Renatta Nzomono	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Frank Royle	present	Staff Member
Anxela Sejdini	present	Student Member
Jacqueline Sheehy	<i>apologies</i>	Member and Safeguarding Champion
Terri Stacey-White	present	Student member
Tim Strong	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Kalim Uddin	present	Staff Member
Kapil Wadhvani	present	Member
Terry Wheeler	present	Member
Graham Woolnough	present	Member and Vice Chair of the Corporation
Penny Wycherley	present	Member, Principal and Chief Executive

CLERK TO THE CORPORATION

Val Bartlett Clerk to the Corporation

IN ATTENDANCE

Amir Ahmed	Director of Services for Students
Peter Doble	Director of Finance
Stella Fleming	Assistant Principal Learning & Quality
Maxine Smith	Assistant Principal Adult Learning
Peter Stone	Assistant Principal Curriculum & Innovation

Governors had attended the official opening of the STEM Centre immediately prior to the Corporation meeting.

The Chair asked that thanks be passed on to relevant staff for such an impressive building and opening event.

113.17 WELCOME TO NEW GOVERNORS

The Chair welcomed Alison Morris, Anxela Sejdini and Terri Stacey-White to their first meeting of the Corporation.

114.17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received and accepted from:

Renatta Nzomono	– work commitment
Jacqueline Sheehy	– prior commitment
Tim Strong	– holiday

115.17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

116.17 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2017 and 7 NOVEMBER 2017

The Minutes of the Corporation meetings held on 31 October 2017 and 7 November 2017 were approved by the Corporation and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

117.17 MATTERS ARISING

91.17 – Governor Training

Governors were reminded to undertake the online Safeguarding and Prevent training and to inform the Clerk when this has been completed.

108.17 – Self –Assessment of Governance

The Chair, Principal and Clerk are to meet in early January to draft some priorities for consideration by the Corporation

It was agreed to move immediately to Agenda item 10.

118.17 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Corporation received and considered the Principal's report, which included a context section about measuring the learner journey. Information on the measures analysed included achievement and the underpinning sources of data and national averages.

The Principal also drew particular attention to risk management implications including recent behaviour and security issues in the Borough and the poor behaviour by a few WFC students. The College management has a detailed strategy for maintaining the security of the campus so students and staff feel safe on site.

It was noted that the Government is putting additional resources into the support for the mental health of young people and that the College is also currently working on this along with partnership groups for whom this is a priority area.

The Corporation was reminded that a full Ofsted inspection is expected early next year and that the College is ensuring it is fully prepared and ready for this.

The Principal then informed Governors that one risk has very recently been reduced in that the College had been successful in its tender for a non-levy apprenticeship contract. This will fund new starts from 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019 with a contract value of £575k (bid score of 1650/1700) which funds only 40% of the contract bid and that there appears to have been a national rationing process.

Governors then scrutinised the Balanced Scorecard and the red RAG rating regarding Attendance to 30 November in English and maths. This issue was discussed in detail and reassurance was given that there is a continued strong focus on this area. The Principal explained the R04 retention data return for young people indicates a fall of 0.3% and that this position reflected recent incidents in the Borough including security issues, student discipline, poor behaviour and/or poor attendance.

Following the request by Governors at the meeting on 30 October 2017 that every Principal's report include information on the 19+ Level 2 and 19+ Level 3 Access areas of concern which are included in the Intensive Care Courses attention was then drawn to all of these courses and the associated retention and attendance data. It was recognised that almost all of these courses are now doing well with only two exceptions and the detailed actions being taken were acknowledged. In addition, the value added indications for the College are looking very positive.

The Corporation then discussed the Complaints and Compliments report for 2016-17 and noted that the number of complaints had, very pleasingly, fallen significantly. The College benefits from increased use of the information gained from compliments and complaints to consolidate and improve the service delivery to all stakeholders. The impact of this information along with a thorough analysis of the data will all help the College moving forward.

The report on Higher Education was then presented to the Corporation. The report included an overview of the H.E. provision for the autumn term and also the outcome of the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Review visit to the College in May 2017 and the actions completed to meet the identified required improvements.

The report identified that H.E. is a possible growth area for the College – currently there are low numbers - and that this may meet local needs as the Borough has a lower proportion of its residents taking Level 4 qualifications than the national London average. It was highlighted that across London H.E. numbers in further education colleges have fallen significantly in the last 2 years and are threatened by competition from HEI's without a cap and the growth of higher apprenticeships.

The College's Strategic Plan will be subject to a full review in 2018 and the expansion of H.E. will be considered again at that point.

The Corporation received and noted the Principal's update report including the items specifically referred to under the risk section, the Complaints and Compliments Report 2016-17 and the Higher Education Report.

The Corporation approved the following recommendations to Higher Education:

- **Waltham Forest College has a responsibility to continue to provide important information, to seek consent from students for any changes to the offer/course, and give students at least 14 days to withdraw their acceptance of the offer without any penalty**
- **Waltham Forest College will include a statement on publications, the website and through the Admissions Terms and Conditions in Student Services, that courses may be subject to suspension due to low recruitment**

The Corporation agreed to move to agenda item 8.

119.17 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2017-18 - MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - 31 OCTOBER 2017

The Director of Finance provided the Corporation with a position statement on the financial performance of the College up to 31 October 2017.

The College is continuing to project a budget deficit for the year of £175k, which would mean that the "good" financial health rating is retained. In order to achieve this, the finances need to continue to be managed very tightly with close management of a number of key risks. These risks include retaining the students already enrolled, recruiting more students as planned, securing new income streams, minimising the use of agency and interim staff, minimising the use of franchise in order to achieve the adult funding allocation and maintaining tight cost control.

The Corporation was informed that whilst the financial position in 2017-18 remains tight, the prospects for 2018-19 look positive with much greater financial resilience for the College. One reason for this is that the number of 16-18 year olds on roll as at 1 November 2017 is 10% more compared to the same time last year and this will generate c.£650-700k gross income in 2018-19.

The Principal then highlighted that the current increase in the numbers of applications for 2018-19 compared to a similar time last year plus the increase in Study Programme learners for 2017-18 who may well progress to 2018-19 will all help the case for eligibility for additional in-year funding for 16-18 provision during 2018-19. This will further strengthen the College's financial position next year whilst also meeting local community needs.

The Corporation acknowledged that this is very positive news but that it may well also bring some risks requiring careful management. Discussion then took place regarding the potential risks including preparing for next year with applicable staffing and accommodation plus the College will be going through a period of significant senior management change. It was agreed that updated figures on applications and progression continue to be provided in the Principal's report.

20:05 AS left the meeting - 20:10 AA/SF/MS/PS left the meeting

FR/KU left for this part of the item

The Corporation was reminded of previous discussions held in June 2017 regarding the possibility of paying College employees a consolidated inflationary pay award. The Director of Finance informed Governors that the College's financial position, as now reported, indicates that a pay award of 1.5% from February 2018 is affordable this year. Such a pay award would commit a full year cost of £150k in the budget. It was acknowledged that the increase in learner numbers in 2017-18 – which is above the indicative forecast for 2018-19 contained within the three-year financial forecast – would provide additional funds giving financial resilience to the College.

The Corporation approved the payment of an inflationary pay award of 1.5% to all College employees from 1 February 2018.

The Corporation:

1. Received and noted the Management Accounts relating to the financial performance of the College in 2017-18 as at 31 October 2017;
2. Noted the anticipated additional income for 16-18 year old learners in 2018-19;
3. Noted the key financial risks being managed by the College.

20:25 FR/KU re-joined the meeting and TSW left the meeting

The Director of Finance then updated Governors on the Town Hall site development plans and the very recent notification that the College has been successful in its bid to the One Public Estate (OPE) for funds to contribute towards the development costs for the next stage of the estates strategy.

The Corporation is to receive a presentation from the Local Authority on the Town Hall redevelopment plans at its meeting on 16 January 2018.

120.17 AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING 21 NOVEMBER 2017, THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE FOR 2016-17 AND THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2016-17

The Corporation received and noted the unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 21 November 2017.

The Corporation ratified the appointments of Graham Woolnough as Chair of the Audit Committee and Youness Abidou as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee for 2017-18.

The Corporation approved the Audit Committee Terms of Reference for 2017-18.

The Corporation received and considered the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2016-17. It was noted that there were no specific comments from the Audit Committee meeting held on 21 November 2017 where the draft Financial Statements, the report prepared by Grant Thornton and the Letter of Representation had all been received and considered. The Audit Committee had agreed to recommend the Financial Statements to the Corporation.

The Director of Finance then drew attention to page 7 of the Financial Statements, which set out the reasons why the College considers that it remains a going concern for the forthcoming 12 months period from the signing of the accounts to 31 December 2018 and beyond. These include:

- No material uncertainties
- "Good" financial health
- Increase in 16-18 learners translating into additional income in 2018-19
- Strong detailed financial forecasting and planning arrangements
- Cash flow estimates are sufficient

The underlying operating surplus is £111k and taking into account the £476k adjustment for the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Financial Statements show that the College incurred a deficit of £0.365million in 2016-17 on a turnover of £19,954 million.

It was noted that over the long term, the deficit on the support staff pension fund should fall as the College is paying over £450k pa additional lump sum payments to the fund in addition to the 14.9% employer contribution on actual staff gross pay.

The final out-turn does still mean that the College's financial health at 31 July 2017 is "Good" as calculated by the ESFA.

It was reported to Governors that the auditors had been very complimentary about the College as they had observed that colleges who are or have gone through merger discussions have also been affected by a noticeable impact on quality, however, this has not been the case for WFC.

The Corporation:

1. Received and considered the Financial Statements for 2016-17 and the associated Audit Findings report prepared by Grant Thornton;
2. Noted the projected out-turn of a £0.111million operating surplus and a deficit for the year of £0.365million after taking into account the adjustment for support staff pensions;
3. Confirmed the College's Going Concern status;
4. Received and noted the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2016-17 from Scrutton Bland;
5. Received and noted the Annual Report of the Audit Committee to the Corporation;
6. Received and noted the latest report on Risk Management and the Risk Register
7. Agreed the Letter of Representation; and
- 8. Approved the College's audited Financial Statements for 2016-17.**

121.17 SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

In accordance with the College's Quality Improvement Policy and Strategy agreed by the Corporation, the Principal reported on the College's Self-Assessment Report for 2016-17 and the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2017-18.

The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) is a culmination of the year's quality cycle including student surveys, termly reviews, course reviews area and cohort SAR's, the learning review process, quality support meetings, external verification and Quality Board meetings and SAR validation meetings which were attended by some Governors.

The headline SAR grades for 2016-17 were noted as:

- Overall Effectiveness all judged to be 'Good'
- Student Cohorts all judged to be 'Good'
- Curriculum areas all judged to be 'Good' apart from Hair and Beauty judged as 'Outstanding'

The SAR contains background information about the Borough and also the transformation programme which started from January 2015.

The Post-Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) was based on the College's QIP for 2016-17 and superseded it as it took into account the findings of the Ofsted inspection of November 2016. The PIAP was largely effective in improving the quality of provision with nearly all actions completed and the vast majority having the intended impact, which is evident in the learner journey, learner feedback and local word of mouth attracting more students to the College. Incomplete actions were amber rated, revised and rolled forward to the 2017-18 QIP.

The QIP reflects the more common issues and actions at cohort and area level, which are monitored through Quality Support meetings. The QIP is monitored through the Executive Team meetings and the Quality Board. It was noted that specific actions such as support for Intensive Care Courses are monitored frequently. The QIP is a live document and issues and actions may be added in-year.

Governors noted that there are some actions in the QIP relating to sustainability and strategic direction, which require action by the Corporation. It was agreed that the Chair, Principal and Clerk meet to review these and bring back to the Corporation on 16 January for further discussion.

The Chair thanked all staff for the hard work which has been done throughout the year and the resultant SAR report.

The Corporation noted:

1. The College's Self-Assessment Report for 2016-17;
2. The Post Inspection Action Plan review and referred actions; and
3. The Quality Improvement Plan for 2017-18 and the Corporation's associated responsibility for actions

122.17 SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Corporation received and noted the unconfirmed Minutes of the Search Committee meetings held on 27 September 2017 and 31 October 2017.

The Corporation approved the recommendation of the Search Committee that Terry Wheeler be re-appointed as a Corporation member for a further term until 31 July 2018.

123.17 AoC CONFERENCE

The Chair reported on the annual AoC Conference in that there had been no major announcements made and that reducing it to 2 days was a good use of time.

124.17 REPORT FROM REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

It was agreed that this be taken as a confidential item as it referred to Senior Post Holders.

*20:50 PW/FR/KU/PD left the meeting
YA joined the meeting*

The Chair wished everyone a Happy Christmas and the meeting closed at 21:00

The meeting closed at 20:45

These minutes have been approved by the Corporation and signed by the Chair as a correct record

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SIGNED

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DATE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION

Minute No.	Issue and Action	Target Date	Achievement Date
69.17	<p>Strategic Plan</p> <p>It was noted that the Quality Improvement Policy and Quality Improvement Strategy will also feed into the College's Strategic Plan which now needs to be updated.</p>	Autumn 2017	
91.17	<p>The Corporation noted the mapping of evidence document regarding the English Colleges' Code of Good Governance and that in particular, reference is made to the College's Strategic Plan 2014-17 which now requires an addendum for 2017-18 i.e. until a new Principal is appointed and further consideration and discussion may be given to a new 3-year plan.</p>	16 January 2018	
91.17	<p>Governor Training</p> <p>Online Safeguarding and Prevent refresher training is to be completed by all Governors.</p>		
108.17	<p>Self – assessment of Governance</p> <p>It was agreed that the Chair, Principal and Clerk meet to pull together some draft priorities for Corporation to consider and approve.</p>	16 January 2018	