

## THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2017

#### MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Youness Abidou	present	Member
Steve Besley	present	Member and Vice Chair of the Corporation
Paul Butler	present	Member, Chair of the Corporation and Safeguarding Champion
Renatta Nzomono	present	Member
Frank Royle	present	Staff Member
Jacqueline Sheehy	present	Member and Safeguarding Champion
Tim Strong	present	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

Peter Doble	Director of Finance
Stella Fleming	Assistant Principal Learning & Quality
Maxine Smith	Assistant Principal H.E., Access and Care Industries
Peter Stone	Assistant Principal Curriculum & Innovation

#### **81.17 WELCOME TO A NEW CORPORATION MEMBER**

Following a call for nominations for a Staff Governor Teaching, two nominations were received and a ballot was subsequently held. The Corporation duly ratified the outcome of this ballot.

**Frank Royle was appointed as Staff Governor teaching with immediate effect for a term of four years to 18 September 2021.**

Maxine Smith has recently joined the College as Assistant Principal H.E., Access and Care Industries.

The Chair welcomed both Frank and Maxine to the meeting.

#### **82.17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

#### **83.17 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.

#### **84.17 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 17 JULY 2017**

Minute 67.17 should read ....Penny Wycherley and an agreed end date of 31 July **2018**.

The Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 17 July 2017 were approved by the Corporation and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **85.17 MATTERS ARISING**

72.16 – Sainsbury Review – an update on T levels will be brought in due course to a future meeting of the Corporation

68.17 – The Chair had attended an all staff meeting to pass on thanks to all regarding the current position of the College

There were no other matters arising.

## **86.17 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Corporation received a presentation from the Principal which included up to date data regarding achievement for 2016-17 and enrolment for 2017-18.

The data included critical headings as to where WFC sits amongst London Colleges and the national averages for General F.E. and Tertiary Colleges (data taken from education & training institutions funded by the DfE 2015-16).

The following was highlighted in particular:

- Overall achievement rates
  - o National average overall achievement rate (2015-16) was 82.1%
  - o WFC is currently at 83.3% with c81 unknowns (which is a very good position compared to 2014-15 in particular) so could reach 84%
  - o 3 year trend for London Colleges – WFC was 20<sup>th</sup> out of 26 in 2015-16 and based on 83.3% would rise up to be number 11
  - o 19+ Achievement (All) 3 year WFC trend is 79.2% - 81.6% - 85.4% which is just below national average of 86%. This moves WFC up from 20<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> in the London table
  - o 16-18 – 3 year WFC trend is 68.8% - 73.7% - 79.2%. with a potential of reaching 81% (national average is 79.1%) and therefore number 5 in the table

The above data indicates that WFC is one of the most successful colleges in London

- English and Maths
  - o This was a particular area which Governors had requested a focus be on and regular reports have been presented at Corporation meetings
  - o English & maths – WFC 3 year trend is 53.7% - 62.7% - 70.7% which is 13 % above the National average
  - o English & maths Study Programmes 16-19 year olds – WFC 3 year trend 50.5% - 61.3% - 71.17%. The national average is 56.8%. It was noted that over 60% of these WFC students do not have English as their first language
  - o Issue is still around Level 2 maths where success rates are below the national average and Governors were reassured that, as previously reported, there are robust strategies now in place for relevant Study Programme students, Access students and those taking discrete English and maths. Level 2 adult maths is c.17.7% below the national average and there is a need to manage this better including the assessment process and diagnostic testing

Governors congratulated all on this superb effort and acknowledged the hard work and relentless focus that has contributed toward these results.

There have been some significant changes in the past few years which have brought about these improvements and Governors expressed how very proud they are to be associated with the College.

- Enrolments
  - o There are two targets, namely the funding allocation and the Curriculum planning
  - o Study Programme students 16-19 are the biggest single income line and the College has not achieved its target numbers for some time

- Very pleasingly, for 2017-18, the number of new students, progressors, High Needs Prince's Trust all indicate that the College has substantially exceeded its allocation by c100 which would provide c.£500k additional funding in 2018 -19, however, this is dependent upon actual numbers as at 1 November 2017
- The impact of increased numbers on social spaces and ensuring a good student experience is being closely managed
- 19+ enrolment figures are steady
- Loans funding for vocational and Access saw good numbers start on 13 September and there are courses proposed for January and also are some November starts

A Governor probed the proportion of students in each category and how this may impact on teaching and learning. It was noted that group sizes, hours of teaching in year and the hours students need to be taught for equate to the 'golden triangle' and that currently the increased numbers are being managed effectively.

The percentage of staff costs against the overall budget was questioned and it was reported that these are c.68% which does include subcontracting.

The point was made that evidence of the quality of the provision is a very good marketing tool for the College and the position the College is now in will also help it be more sustainable in the longer term. The increased growth includes students who live in Epping and Redbridge and the Vector Report on travel to learn will be used to present information to the Corporation in due course.

The Chair, on behalf of the Corporation, reiterated its gratitude to the Senior Team and staff for their efforts over the last 2 years in particular and that everyone is extremely pleased with the direction in which the College is moving.

The Corporation received and noted the Principal's update report.

It was agreed to move to agenda item 14 and that staff members leave the meeting for this item.

**19:45 FR/KU/SF/MS/PS left the meeting**

## **87.17 FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Governors were requested to consider this financial update report in conjunction with the report on the Monthly Management Accounts for 31 August 2017.

Corporation approval was sought regarding the payment of a one-off honorarium to staff in recognition of their contribution to the College's strong financial and achievement performance in 2016/17.

The College's projected financial out-turn for the year shows a surplus of £206k, an improvement of £281k compared to the projection reported in July. In addition, College achievement rates are projected to be at least 1% above national average in 2016/17. Both these improved performances have been as a result of College-wide team work to which all staff have contributed to.

The proposal for Corporation consideration was for a one-off honorarium payment in addition to any possible 2017/18 inflationary pay award. The costs of this one-off honorarium would be funded in 2016/17 from the higher than anticipated surplus.

This honorarium directly relates to College performance in 2016/17 and as a one-off payment will not create an on-going financial commitment in further years in the way an inflationary pay award would. The College's financial health rating would not be affected by this and would remain "good".

Governors were reminded that the financial solvency and viability of the College remains the most significant risk on the College's risk register. The payment of a one-off honorarium is considered to be affordable and does not put the College's financial position at risk. The payment also addresses the risk of failing to retain staff at a time of general pay restraint by making a modest but noticeable payment to every member of staff.

Discussions regarding the amount of a one-off honorarium then took place and it was agreed that it be equivalent to approximately half of last year's surplus and to 1% of the staff annual payroll and to be funded from last year's surplus.

Subject to consideration of the draft final Management Accounts at 31 July 2017, the following was agreed in principle:

**In recognition and thanks to staff the Corporation approved a one-off honorarium payment of £325 or pro-rata to all those staff who were employed at the College in May 2017 and are still employed at the College in October 2017. This honorarium will be paid equally and on a full time equivalent pro-rata basis to all eligible members of staff including agency staff who are members of staff now but who were working at the College in May 2017 as agency staff. This will be paid in the October 2017 salary.**

The Corporation will continue to monitor student enrolment with the intention of agreeing a pay increase, if this is affordable, once the student numbers and retention for 2017-18 are clear and stable.

**20:00 TW left the meeting**  
**FR/KU/SF/MS/PS re-joined the meeting**

## **88.17 DRAFT FINAL MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AT 31 JULY 2017 AND FINANCIAL UPDATE 2017/18**

The Director of Finance informed the Corporation of a strengthening financial position as the College is projecting a £206k surplus in 2016/17 compared to the previously projected £75k deficit.

This improves the College's financial resilience and it retains "good" financial health rating at 31 July 2017 making it the third successive year of "good" financial health.

A deficit of £175k is still projected for 2017/18 retaining "good" financial health at 31 July 2018.

It was acknowledged that these figures are subject to the College's financial statements audit which will commence on 9 October 2017. The audited financial statements for 2016/17 will be reported in draft to the Audit Committee on 21 November 2017 and then for final approval to the Corporation on 12 December 2017.

The only further adjustment that is anticipated to the College's out-turn position relates to the impact of the annual local government pension scheme revaluation. In 2016/17 this added £281k to the deficit though any adjustment is excluded from the financial health calculations; it is in effect an end of year accounting entry outside of the College's control.

Attention was then drawn to the main reasons for the improvement and it was noted that the year-end predictions had been unduly cautious as further savings and additional income have been identified. Effective management action was taken during the year to mitigate multiple financial risks particularly around offsetting the loan income shortfall, securing the adult funding allocation, securing additional adult apprenticeship funding and continuing to manage costs tightly.

Of the 17 Financial Performance Indicators, 5 are red (not achieved) and 12 are green (achieved) reflecting the continuous positive improvements.

Attention was then drawn to 2017/18 and that the most important trend relates to student enrolment which is the fundamental driver for the Colleges' financial health.

Currently, student recruitment appears very positive and above target which, once confirmed, would mean generating extra funding in 2018/19 and possibly in 2017/18 too although this is at the ESFA's discretion as there is no precise formula for this.

The College is seeking to recruit more adult students for direct delivery in College thus reducing the need for franchise, there is a potential opportunity to increase Advanced Learner loan student numbers including entering into a partnership with Excellence- Solutions Ltd (subject to due diligence) and Apprenticeship income targets are likely to be achieved although new recruitment is slow and potentially at risk due to the new funding arrangements.

In addition, given the success of delivery on two ESF projects on which the College is a partner, an increase in contract values is anticipated for 2017/18.

Governors were then updated on discussions regarding the Town Hall's proposed plans for its campus redevelopment and opportunities for joint work with the College. There have been positive, strategic meetings with representatives of the Council. The College would need to spend money on design and consultancy fees to develop its own associated plans further. There may be GLA funding support for project development, but as this is not guaranteed, the College would have to commit its own funds in the first instance of up to c£50k. The plans would be linked to combining some resources and partnership working. The headline timescales for this proposed development is for the Local Authority to submit an 'in principle' planning application in April 2018.

Attention was then drawn to the consideration of the payment of an inflationary pay award in 2017/18 should student enrolment exceed target and students are retained and that management consideration is also being given to changing both the HR and Student Record Systems to align them more closely with current sector practice and to drive efficiency savings.

The table indicating these potential budget variances was noted and that there is a risk that the likely additional costs may not be covered by the possible income.

Governors then discussed the above financial information in further detail acknowledging the remarkable delivery of such a positive financial out-turn and questioned if there was anything which is now known from 2016/17 that would change expectations for 2017/18. By way of response it was noted that caution must still be applied and that the tight control exercised throughout in 2016/17 has allowed the benefits to roll forward.

The Corporation acknowledged that both the Principal and Director of Finance are to retire within the next 6 months and that this will introduce a different level of risk and unknowns. The strategic and management decisions and process the College has gone through to get to the current position will be shared with the applicants for these posts.

Having considered the draft final Management Accounts at 31 July 2017, and as per Minute 77.17, the Corporation confirmed its approval of the payment of a one-off honorarium of £325 subject to the agreed conditions. The Principal is to inform the Unions tomorrow (20 September 2017) and the Chair is to write and inform all staff.

The Corporation:

1. Received and noted the draft financial management accounts as at 31 July 2017 relating to the financial performance of Waltham Forest College in 2016/17;
2. Noted the projected out-turn of a £206k surplus which places the College in "good" financial health;
3. Noted the year end status of the financial performance indicators;
4. Agreed to receive the draft 2016/17 financial statements for approval at the Corporation meeting on 12 December 2017;
5. Noted the updated 2017/18 financial position;
6. Agreed, in principle, subject to due diligence, that the College should enter into a partnership agreement with Excellence- Solutions Ltd for the delivery of level 3 provision.

## **89.17 COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT – LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The Principal introduced the draft College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) on the Effectiveness of Leadership and Management for discussion by Governors and the Assistant Principals (AP's).

Governors were informed that the College is to receive an Ofsted Support and Challenge visit on 17 October 2017 and that a full Ofsted Inspection may be anticipated at any time from early 2018.

Governors and the AP's then discussed, in smaller groups, the draft SAR in the context of the Ofsted definition as to what Governors should be doing and the areas of strength and also for improvement. Feedback from these discussion is to be provided to the Chair and Principal and will help inform the Governance SAR too.

It was agreed that the grade for Leadership and Management is 'Good' grade 2 but that this may be re-visited in the Spring 2018 half term.

## **90.17 COLLABORATION**

The Principal provided a verbal update on collaboration discussions with New City College.

Both Principals have met and drawn up a list of possible areas of collaboration including exploring joint bids to employers as part of the Apprenticeship levy, working with H.E. and also the current WFC HR systems which are now in need of updating.

Further meetings are planned at Principal level with a gradual approach being taken in the first instance.

The Corporation reconfirmed that following the Area Review process and a subsequent Structures and Prospects Appraisal where no suitable partner was identified at that point, the College is continuing to stand-alone. The Chair has met with David Jeffrey (DfE) and is to meet again in November to update him on the College's position.

## **91.17 GOVERNANCE ISSUES.**

### **The Corporation approved the Standing Orders, Code of Conduct and Scheme of Delegation for 2017/18.**

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.

The list of training and events attended by Members of the Corporation and the Clerk to the Corporation during 2016-17 was noted and that online Safeguarding and Prevent refresher training is to now be completed by all Governors.

Attendance at Corporation meetings was provided in detail with the average overall attendance rate for the Corporation in 2016/17 at 79% (75% in 15/16).

The current Skills Audit proforma is under review by the Search Committee and all Governors will be requested to complete this in due course.

The College Self-Assessment includes a validation day and Governors were invited to attend this panel on 11 October 2017 from 13:30 to 17:30.

The unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 6 July 2017 were noted.

The Clerk reminded Governors that Charities Commission may consider the remuneration of Chairs in exceptional circumstances and that this may include the additional work being undertaken by Chairs of Corporations resulting from the Area Review process.

It was agreed to discuss the remuneration of members as a confidential item at the end of the meeting and that the Chair of the Corporation would leave at that point.

## **92.17 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR(S) OF THE CORPORATION 2017-19**

Nominations were sought for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporation.

As per Standing Order 8.5 Paul Butler (Chair) stood down and another Corporation member, Youness Abidou, took the Chair and invited nominations

Only one nomination was received for Chair of the Corporation, namely Paul Butler, who was duly proposed by Terry Wheeler and seconded by Jacqueline Sheehy.

**The Corporation approved the appointment of Paul Butler as Chair of the Corporation effective from 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2019.**

Paul Butler then took the Chair.

Only one nomination was received for Vice Chair of the Corporation, namely Graham Woolnough, who was duly proposed by Paul Butler and seconded by Youness Abidou.

**The Corporation approved the appointment of Graham Woolnough as Vice Chair of the Corporation effective from 1 October 2017 to 26 January 2018 when his term of office as a Governor will come to an end.**

## **93.17 SENIOR POST HOLDER APPOINTMENTS – UPDATE**

The Clerk updated all on the current status regarding the senior post holder appointments of a Principal and a Deputy Principal Corporate Resources.

The associated timelines for each position were noted and that AoC has been engaged to assist in the recruitment of a Principal and Protocol for a Deputy Principal.

**The Job Description for the position of Principal & Chief Executive was duly approved.**

Any further comments regarding the Person Specification were requested by the following day.

The Corporation now needs to form a Selection panel of 5 members – including the Chair- and the Clerk is to contact all Governors regarding their availability.

The advert for Deputy Principal has now gone out with a closing date of Monday 25 September, shortlisting on Friday 29 September and interviews on Thursday 5 October 2017.

**21:20 PB/PW/SF/PD/PS & MS left the meeting**

*The meeting closed at 21:30*

**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
72.16	<b>Sainsbury Review</b> Update on consultation	TBA	
50.17	<b>Higher Education</b> It was agreed that there be a specific item on the H.E. provision in the next Principal's report	Autumn 2017	
69.17	<b>Strategic Plan</b> 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.	Autumn 2017	
91.17	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.		
91.17	<b>Governor Training</b>  The list of training and events attended by Members of the Corporation and the Clerk to the Corporation during 2016- 17 was noted and that online Safeguarding and Prevent refresher training is to now be completed by all Governors.		
93.17	<b>Senior Post Holders</b>  The Corporation now needs to form a Selection panel of 5 members – including the Chair- and the Clerk is to contact all Governors regarding their availability.	Sept 2017	