

THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2017

MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Youness Abidou	present	Member
Steve Besley	present	Member
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	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Terry Wheeler	<i>apologies</i>	Member
Graham Woolnough	<i>apologies</i>	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 H.E., Access and Care Industries
Peter Stone	<i>apologies</i> Assistant Principal Curriculum & Innovation

The Chair welcomed Amir to his first meeting of the Corporation

94.17 APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNORS

The Clerk reported that elections for the Students' Union had been held just before half term and that Terri Stacey-White had been elected President and Angela Sejdini as Vice President of the Students' Union for 2017-18. Governors were reminded that it is custom and practice to appoint the President and Vice President of Waltham Forest College Students' Union to act as the two Student Members of the Corporation.

The Corporation ratified the appointment of Terri Stacey- White and Angela Sejdini as the two Student Members until 31 July 2018.

95.17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received and accepted from:

Kapil Wadhvani – work commitment
Terry Wheeler – previous commitment
Graham Woolnough – previous commitment

96.17 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.

97.17 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER AND 9 OCTOBER 2017

The Minutes of the Corporation meetings held on 19 September 2017 and 9 October 2017 were approved by the Corporation and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

98.17 MATTERS ARISING

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

There were no other matters arising.

99.17 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Corporation received a presentation from the Principal which included particular reference and data relating to managing the learner journey. This included the measures used by the College to calculate attendance and punctuality and retention. The College target for attendance is 87% (for London Colleges the average attendance is between 80% and 87%) and the monitoring and measures taken to review attendance were noted.

The Principal then drew attention to specific security risks. A student incident occurred just before half term which College staff and security dealt with appropriately and has resulted in further experienced security staff being added to the team. College staff will also receive training in 'lockdown' procedures as a CPD activity and there is to be a repeat of the knife arch search which will continue to send the signal that the College continues to be a safe environment.

The Principal's report also contained information on the draft College Self-Assessment Report where all headlines were judged to be Grade 2; Good.

Governors then examined the data regarding outcomes for students.

- Achievement overall is 84.6% which is a major improvement at 2.5% above the national average and 6% above last year
- Overall achievement for the last 3 years has improved by 9%; for 16-19 this has improved by 12.8% and for 19+ by 6.9%

In examining the data and the significant progress made in achievement over the last three years the following was highlighted in particular to demonstrate this improvement:

- The gender breakdown of WFC students aged 16-19 in 2016/17 was c. one-third female and two thirds male. Nationally, male students 16-19 have a 3.4% achievement rate below the national average, however, as WFC is above the combined national average for both genders this improvement is, therefore, even more significant.
- WFC students have one of the lowest GCSE scores on entry in the country and have a level of deprivation significantly above the national average
- WFC has a significantly large number of black students who nationally, overall, have an achievement rate of 3.5% below the national average and for 16-19 this is 3.2% below. For WFC to achieve above the national average is therefore significantly more remarkable

Attention was then drawn to 19+ Level 2 (L2 Functional Skills maths) and Level 3 Access to H.E. which have both been constant issues and reported upon to Governors throughout previous Principal's reports. The size of these cohorts and the measures put in place to address these issues were summarised by the Principal.

The Principal also highlighted 10 'Intensive Care Courses' which are receiving particular scrutiny, support and monitoring.

In response to a Governor's question regarding the measures taken in Access, the Assistant Principal Adult Learning described a number of actions and changes which have been implemented in this area.

In order to aid continued scrutiny of the above, the Corporation requested 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.

The Corporation noted the targets for 2017-18.

The Corporation approved the sub-contracting policy for 2016-17.

The Chair commended all staff on the notable outcomes for students and acknowledged the hard work and relentless focus that has contributed toward these results.

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

107.17 OFSTED – SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE VISIT 17 OCTOBER 2017

The Principal circulated a letter from Rieks Drijver- Senior HMI – following his visit to the College on 17 October 2017.

The hard work, progress and changes made to date had been acknowledged by Ofsted including the impact on learners and the work of the Senior Team in maintaining a positive culture. The point was made that the College just needs to keep on doing what it is currently doing.

A full Inspection is anticipated in spring 2018 and it was noted that Stella Fleming will be the College nominee leading on this. Preparations for this inspection will include briefing sessions for Governors.

The Principal emphasised that it will be a challenge to grow the College without the management infrastructure and capacity, for example in writing bids, as staff are stretched quite thinly. If the College is successful in receiving additional in-year income for its increased numbers of 16-18 students and other bid monies, this will ease the pressure on the team slightly.

The Corporation received and noted the Ofsted Support and Challenge letter.

108.17 STRATEGIC TASK GROUP MEETING – 11 OCTOBER 2017

The Chair reported that a group of Governors and the Executive Team had met to discuss possible addendums to the current Strategic Plan and also consider the self –assessment of governance.

Discussion included holding an event for employers and Governors, accompanying staff on Learning Walks, 'speed dating' sessions with students, and presentations at Corporation meetings from Curriculum and Department heads.

It was agreed that the Chair, Principal and Clerk meet to pull together some draft priorities for Corporation to consider and approve.

20:00 SF/MS/AA left the meeting

109.17 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2017-18 - MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2017

The Director of Finance reported on the financial performance of the College up to 30 September 2017.

A deficit of £175k for the year is still being projected which would mean that the "good" financial health rating is retained. To ensure this financial objective is achieved, it was acknowledged that a number of key risks need to be continuously managed including retaining students already enrolled, recruiting more students as planned, minimising the use of agency and interim staff and maintaining tight cost control, whilst at the same time maintaining the quality of the learner journey.

Attention was drawn to the high level and specific financial risks as detailed in the report.

It was noted that the College is to submit an ESFA bid for up to £975k more adult funding which would deliver a contribution of at least £200k to the College overheads.

The College has also exceeded its target numbers for 16-18-year-old students – a growth of c10% over last year - although there is now less likelihood of receiving additional in-year funding, this will impact positively on funding in 2018-19 of c.£573k.

In addition to the above, there is another potential area of income growth through the College's involvement in three ESF projects which may provide a potential c£75k contribution to the overheads.

The College has also submitted a tender for non-levy funding Apprenticeships which may start in January 2018. It was noted that most of the work the College does is with small non-levy businesses. A Governor queried the national drop in apprenticeships and it was acknowledged that recruitment of new apprenticeships dropped significantly from May to August, however, numbers are now beginning to improve and the College expects to meet its target for the current year.

Attention was then drawn to the capital budget for 2017-18.

A thorough and detailed review of the options regarding the student records system is being undertaken with the cost of potentially moving to ProSoluton (which is used by most London Colleges) being c.£150k. It was agreed, for information purposes, to provide Governors with an overview of the package offer.

The Corporation had received a detailed report in July 2017 regarding the implications of the Council's Town Hall site development plans on the College's own estates strategy. The business and estate objectives were detailed in the covering report and it was also noted that the One Public Estate (OPE) programme has advised that they would welcome a bid from the College as an extension to the Town Hall Campus. This bid is for funds to contribute towards the development costs for the next stage of the estates strategy i.e. submission of an outline planning application for the whole scheme, detailed planning permission for the one storey extension of the hospitality and catering facilities on the west end of the main building plus a review of the business plan for the residential development. It is anticipated this will cost c £315k. The College is seeking £120k from the OPE programme and has also submitted a bid for development funding to GLA for £120k; the balancing £75k would need to be funded from the College's own resources. In response to a Governor's query, it was noted that £75k is the maximum level of risk and progress would be monitored through the Principal's report and Management accounts.

The Corporation also noted that a bid for £200k has been submitted to the GLA Small Projects fund to create a new training kitchen on the ground floor of the west wing and for a light refurbishment of the Mallinson suite. The total cost of the project is £430k; the remaining £230k would be met from the College's 2018/19 capital budget and, if successful with the bid to GLA, these works would be undertaken in summer 2018.

The College auditors have advised that the costs for changing the student record system and investing in the initial design work for a joint development project with the Local Authority may be capitalised.

The Director of Finance reported that the audit of the 2016/17 financial statements is nearing completion and the anticipated operating surplus is £111k and "good" financial health.

The Corporation noted the letter from the ESFA regarding the College's Financial Plan 2017-2019 and that they have concluded that the underlying grade for the College is 'good'.

The Corporation:

1. Received and noted the draft financial management accounts as at 30 September 2017;
2. Noted the key financial risks being managed by the College;

3. Noted that the College has submitted bids for additional revenue and capital funding to the ESFA, GLA and Cabinet Office;
4. Agreed to commit £150k of capital expenditure to purchase a new student record system; and
5. Agreed to commit £75k of capital expenditure to fund design and planning costs to progress the next stage of the College's estates strategy.

110.17 COLLABORATION

The Principal reported that New City College has launched a bid for an Institute of Technology around construction and that WFC is to be a partner in this bid.

Collaboration discussions are also planned with Newham College regarding the apprenticeship levy.

111.17 SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Corporation was informed that following a round of interviews with a number of interested candidates for the current Governor vacancies on the Corporation, the Search Committee had met on 31 October 2017.

The Committee agreed to recommend the appointment of Alison Morris as a Corporation member with immediate effect as her skills, knowledge and experience of the F.E. sector in particular will provide the Corporation with pertinent expertise.

The Corporation approved the appointment of Alison Morris as a Corporation member with immediate effect and for an initial term of 12 months.

20:30 FR & KU left the meeting and YA joined the meeting

112.17 SENIOR POST HOLDER APPOINTMENTS – UPDATE

The Clerk updated all on the current status regarding the senior post holder appointment of a new Principal. The Selection Panel had met on 20 October 2017 and from receipt of 16 applications, agreed a short list of six candidates. All six have been invited to attend an assessment day on Monday 6 November and, where applicable, a final interview on Tuesday 7 November 2017.

As previously agreed, a Corporation meeting is to be held on Tuesday 7 November 2017 at 1pm to receive a recommendation from the Selection Panel.

Adrian Cottrell has agreed to commence his duties as Deputy Principal Corporate Resources as from 2 January 2018.

Peter Doble is due to retire at the end of December 2017 and in addition to this, the Head of Finance at the College has resigned and will leave at the end of November 2017.

Given the above and that, in effect, there would be no handover period, Peter Doble has held discussions with the Chair in order for him to stay on full time at Waltham Forest College until 31 January 2018 i.e. past his original leaving date. This flexibility from the Director of Finance, would assist with the handover which will greatly help the continuity and sustainability of the College.

The Corporation agreed to discuss the above further detail as a confidential item

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	Strategic Plan 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	Governor Training Online Safeguarding and Prevent refresher training is to be completed by all Governors.		
106.17	Principal's report In order to aid continued scrutiny, the Corporation requested that every Principal's report include information on the 19+ Level 2 and 19+ Level 3 Access areas of concern and also the 10 Intensive Care Courses.	12 December	
108.17	Self – assessment of Governance It was agreed that the Chair, Principal and Clerk meet to pull together some draft priorities for Corporation to consider and approve.	12 December	
109.17	Income and Expenditure budget - ProSolution It was agreed, for information purposes, to provide Governors with an overview of the package offer regarding ProSolution	12 December	