

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation of West Thames College
Held on Wednesday 13 July 2016 in the Banks Room**

Members Present Mr J Bolt (Chair) Ms T Aust Ms S Wilcox
 Ms C Ajit Singh Ms A Patterson Mr T White
 Mr M Michaelides Mr B Armstrong Ms D See
 Mr M Cooper

Also present Mr J Allen

The meeting commenced at 18.00

53 APOLOGIES, QUORACY & ANNOUNCEMENT

Apologies were received from Mr S Castle, Ms L Graves and Mr A Joshie. The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate.

The Clerk confirmed the resignation of Frank Spraggs from the Corporation due to work commitments. The Corporation placed on record thanks to Frank for his contributions made.

54 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declared interests against any agenda item.

55 MINUTES

- (i) It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chair to sign the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting of the Corporation held on 17 March 2016 (Paper 1).
- (ii) It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chair to sign the confidential minutes as an accurate record of the Part III meeting of the Corporation held on 15 June 2016 (Paper 2).

56 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

57 AREA REVIEW TASK GROUP

The notes of the Governor Area Review Group meeting held 21 June 2016 were received and **NOTED** (Paper 3).

An update was given on the meeting of the Area Review Task Group that was held immediately prior to the Corporation meeting.

Discussions have continued and it was confirmed a Joint Steering Group has been set up. A timeline for merger has been drawn up with confirmation given that the timeline is in-line with the Corporations preferred expectation – a merger by 01 August 2017.

There are some clear action points to be pursued by the Area Review Task Group. This includes what does a Group Structure look like? How will it operate? What will be the local offer? Clear lines of accountability are required. What will be the mission and values of the new merged College?

Financial information on the merged College has been made available with an analysis carried out by one of the FE Commissioner's team. If WTC, Harrow and Uxbridge merge, the new organisation would have a turnover of over £80m.

Governors asked if feedback has been received from staff on the proposal. The Principal confirmed four staff sessions have been held. In addition College managers had an away day where positive feedback was received. Managers see more opportunities than threats with the proposal.

Governors asked if there were any further developments with Stanmore. The Principal replied there were no further developments. The College appears to be considering three options for its future and will not make any final decision until September.

58. EXECUTIVE TEAM REPORT

The '*Executive Team Report*' (Paper 4) provided Members with updates on the following topics:

- Financial Matters
- Partnership Update
- Leadership & Management Staffing Update
- Skills Centre/LEP Update
- Quality
- Strategic Planning
- Events

Following the year on year reductions in funding, for 2016-17, the College is facing a reduction in EFA funding (16-18) of £325k and a reduction in Adult Apprenticeship funding of £193k as a result of not meeting planned targets for 2015-16. To offset some of this reduction, the income for 14-16 provision has been increased and the Executive has targeted a net reduction of £600k savings.

Staffing costs have been reduced in line with the reduction in income through a balance of deleting unfilled vacancies and restructuring. The consultation period for proposals for setting the budget for 2016-17 ended on 24th June and the final paper is due to be issued on 11th July. Most of the staffing savings were achieved through unfilled vacancies and restructuring. There have been no voluntary redundancies or compulsory redundancies through this process. Two staff were placed at risk of redundancy as a result of 2 FTEs being reduced to 1.5 FTE. The two staff in question have accepted an equal reduction in hours and therefore no redundancies have been necessary.

In addition the College has achieved substantial savings on the consumables budget not least through the introduction of better technology which has reduced printing costs: the introduction of Multi-Function Devices has allowed the College to stop the use of individual printers by staff and has significantly reduced the cost per copy and a reduction in postage costs. Alongside this, consumables budgets were adjusted in year where enrolment targets were not achieved, resulting in in-year savings. This will be carried forward in to 2016-17.

Longer term the Executive are clear that we cannot continue to operate in the same way as funding is further reduced and there is very little capacity left to sustain further staffing reductions. Growth in alternative income streams and the potential opportunities provided by the proposed strategic alliance will both help the College to prepare for the longer term.

Under partnership matters, the Principal reported on the Interim Education Centre (IEC) and the West Thames College Nursery and North Isleworth Children's Centre.

The College has received a request from the IEC to see whether or not the College would consider them sitting under the structure of the College. At present, IEC sits with Local Borough of Hounslow (LBH) but LBH can no longer retain control of the service unless it becomes registered as a Pupil Referral Unit. The IEC provides education support for fixed term excluded secondary aged pupils (Years 7-11) along with an Outreach and Respite programmes. The IEC has been operating on a self-funding model for the past 10 years. The staffing and activities are sustained by an initial baseline contribution from all Partnership schools at the beginning of the year, followed by a per pupil charge for daily use. The IEC is monitored through the LBH Behaviour and Attendance Management Group which the College is part of. LBH currently commissions places from the College on our alternative Year 10 and Year 11 provision. In 2015-16, they commissioned an additional 2 new courses from us; totalling 25 students aged 14-16. The Principal has a meeting scheduled with the IEC in July to understand more about their initial request. However, it should be noted that any potential partnership would not mean that the temporarily excluded young people would be on site at the College, the Outreach programme would remain.

The Principal confirmed IEC were not working towards a specific deadline and therefore there was time to bring back any recommendations to the next Corporation.

West Thames College Nursery and North Isleworth Children's Centre are exploring with LBH the possibility of the College taking over the Children's Centre in 2016-17. The status of the centre on the West Thames College Site would change from delivering full time Children's Centre services to providing full time day care creating additional places for eligible two, three and four year olds. The Children's Centre vacated the premises on 31st March 2016 but the building has remained equipped with toys and outdoor equipment ready for a provider to start. LBH have recently provided the financial information that the College has been waiting for. The Executive are now in the process of drawing up a business plan to assess the feasibility of the College running the centre alongside the existing nursery. The Executive is already reviewing the delivery model in the current nursery and the College will be extending the year to make the provision more attractive to working parents.

The Principal confirmed that we were looking for a September 2016 start date for this. The business case would be completed by Monday 18th July 2016.

As Corporation approval should be sought on any proposed Memorandum of Understanding and or Heads of Term between the College and LBH, it was **RESOLVED** to delegate through Chairs Action the approval authority to the Chair of the Corporation and Mr Simon Wilcox. Any use of Chairs Action to be reported back to the Corporation.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

59 MONITORING OF COLLEGE PERFORMANCE

(i) Development Plan 2015/16:

The College report '*Development Plan 2015/16: Key Objectives Progress Report*' was received (Paper 5). The paper provided Members with a summary progress update against each of three key goals of:

- Goal 1: To provide an OUTSTANDING learning experience for all our learners
- Goal 2: To be INNOVATIVE and RESPONSIVE to current and future needs
- Goal 3: To provide an EXCELLENT environment and resources.

The following 'Red' assessments were noted:

- 'Outstanding' grade profile for lessons observed is at 43% against the target of 47%. The number of 'Outstanding' and 'good' lessons was at 95% against the target of 97%.
- Attendance is 86.3% against the target of 90%.
- Apprenticeship timely success is at 49% against the target of 60%.
- EFA 16-18 numbers of 1,975 is below the target of 2,037.
- In house apprenticeship numbers of 165 is below the target of 362.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

(ii) Development Plan 2016/17

The College report '*Development Plan 2016/17* was received (Paper 6). The 2016/17 Development Plan is being prepared against an economic, political and educational backdrop which is significantly changing. Cuts in public spending, allied with policy changes, mean that the College faces several more years of uncertainty and volatility.

In light of these issues facing the sector, the proposal is to retain the three goals already in place, these being:

- GOAL 1 To provide an OUTSTANDING learning experience for all our learners
- GOAL 2 To be INNOVATIVE and RESPONSIVE to current and future needs
- GOAL 3 To provide an EXCELLENT environment and resources.

It was noted, and welcomed, on the advice from the Quality Committee, two objectives have been added to Goal 1. The first is on inspection readiness and achieving an outstanding outcome at the next inspection. The second is for increased engagement of students in the provision of an outstanding learning environment.

Having the quality of teaching, learning and assessment at the top of the agenda for everything that the College does will remain a priority in 2016-17.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the three strategic objectives and the broad objectives proposed in the report, with final approval of specific objectives and measureable targets to be an agenda item at the Corporation meeting in October.

60 **TEACHING & EDUCATION FOCUS**

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Quality & Equality Committee meeting held 15 June 2016 (Paper 7).

The National Achievement (formerly Success) Rate Tables for 2014-15 were recently published by the Skills Funding Agency and were subject to review by the Committee.

For West Thames College, the education and training tables present a very positive picture when compared to colleges in local enterprise partnership (LEP) area. This includes colleges across London. The key headlines brought to the attention of the Corporation were as follows:

- Climbing from 11th in our region to 4th for all students at all levels and joining the top 50 colleges (49th) across the country
- Moving up from 10th in our region to 2nd for the performance of our 16-18 year olds across all levels
- Improving from 10th in our region to 3rd for Level 3 provision for 16-18 year olds
- Being the best provider (1st) in our region for adults on Level 1 courses (up from 10th last year) and moving into the top 50 (43rd) across England for students aged over 19 across all levels

There were areas where the College's performance against the national picture could improve further. This is most significant for 16-18 students studying level 2 courses. Performance declined last year and is just below a declining national rate.

National Rates for 16-18 year olds decreased across level 1 and level 2 and indicate the continued importance of doing everything that can be done to ensure students are successful across all aspects of their programmes, in particular English and maths.

The Corporation welcomed the positive information on the College's published success rates and reaffirmed the need to ensure students are successful across all areas of their programme with particular focus on English and maths and improving overall attendance.

The Committee received a report on predicated success rates fore 2015-16 and the Corporation noted the following headline summaries:

- For classroom based learning, the overall predicted success rate is currently at 87.2%, which would represent a 1.7% increase when compared with the results for 2014-15. This would be above the 75th percentile for overall success by 0.9% (86.3%), based on the 2013-14 National Success Rate Tables (NSRT), which remain the most recent available national benchmarks. The overall target for success for 2015-16 is 88% overall including Functional Skills,
- For 16-18s, the predicted success rate is expected to be 85.5%. This is 4.3% above the 2014-15 College success rate for 16-18s for all qualifications (81.2%). This is 1.9% above the 75th percentile (83.6%) for 2013-14 based on NSRT.
- For 19+, predicted success rate is expected to be 89.8%. This is 0.7% above the 2014-15 College rate (89.1%) and 0.7% above the 75th percentile (89.1%) for 2013-14 based on NSRT.
- Overall predicted success for apprenticeships is expected to show an improved picture for 2015-16 with timely success predicted to be 49%. This

would represent an improvement from 2014-15 when timely success was 37%.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Quality & Equality Committee meeting held 15 June 2016.

61 FINANCE & ESTATES FOCUS

The following reports were received:

- Unconfirmed minutes of the Finance & Capital Advisory Group that met on 22 June 2016 (Paper 8)
- Latest Management Accounts (Paper 9)
- College Budget 2016/17 (Paper 10)
- 2-Year Financial Plan 2016/17 & 2017/18(Paper 11)

It was confirmed the Management Accounts, College Budget 2016-17, and Two Year Financial Plan 2016/17 & 2017/18 were subject to a thorough review from the Committee.

Management accounts forecast a year-end operating surplus of £195k against the budget of a surplus of £25k.

The economic climate in which this budget and plan have been prepared continues to be difficult and the College faces a reduction in EFA funding and Adult Apprenticeship funding as a result of not meeting its target allocations in 15/16.

Income excluding Release of Capital Grant in 16/17 is down from this year's forecast outturn by around £13k.

A pay award of 1% in is proposed for 16/17 and has been incorporated in the budget and financial plan to Jul-18 at additional cost of approximately £150k p.a.

Increased Employer's NICs following loss of rebate for contracted-out pension schemes at additional cost of circa £100k.

Income is forecast at £20,890k with expenditure at £20,815k. A 'balanced' revenue budget and plan are presented with a small projected surplus of £75k in each of the two years.

The College Budget 2016-17 includes a capital expenditure programme of £1m.

The calculated Financial Health Grade for the period using the new methodology is 'Good' (down from 'Outstanding' under the old methodology).

The Chief Executive of the Agencies has recently written to Principals and Chairs to remind them of the importance of the budget estimates. In that letter reference is made to a checklist which the Board should review as an agency requirement (included in the papers).

The Corporation reviewed in detail the assumptions made in the commentary in the College Budget 2016-17 and the Two-Year Financial Forecasts 2016/17 & 2017/18; the sensitivities and key risks identified, and the impact of the risks.

After careful scrutiny and review of the assumptions behind the budget, it was **RESOLVED** to approve:

- (i) The College Revenue & Expenditure Budget 2016/17
- (ii) The College Capital Expenditure of £1m, and;
- (ii) The Two Year Financial Forecasts 2016-17 & 2017-18

It was further **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Note the latest Management Accounts; and
- (ii) Note the unconfirmed minutes of the Finance & Capital Advisory Group that met on 22 June 2016.

62 **AUDIT FOCUS**

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held 29 June 2016 (Paper 12).

It was noted the Committee approved the Financial Statement & regularity Audit for the year-end accounts 31 July 2016 and the Internal Audit Strategy & Plan 2016-17.

The Committee reviewed receipt of internal audit visits reports and no issues of concern were being reported to the Corporation.

The Committee reviewed all 'Red' and 'Amber' risks in the Strategic Risk Register. It was confirmed none of the high risks fell within the terms of reference of the Audit Committee but they had been subject to detailed review from the either the Finance Committee or Quality as appropriate. The outcomes of these reviews were as follows:

<p>Finance Committee 22/6/16</p>	<p>The Committee confirmed no new risks were identified through discussions during the meeting.</p> <p>Following review, the Committee was satisfied with the robustness of the range of 'Independent Assurances' identified against each risk that falls under the terms of reference of the Committee. The Committee confirmed that no new risks were identified for inclusion within the Risk Register.</p>
<p>Quality Committee 15/6/16</p>	<p>The Committee confirmed no new risks were identified through discussions during the meeting.</p> <p>Following review, the Committee was satisfied with the robustness of the range of 'Independent Assurances' identified against each risk that falls under the terms of reference of the Committee. The Committee confirmed that no new risks were identified for inclusion within the Risk Register.</p>

63 **GOVERNANCE FOCUS**

As the College is entering a critical period with the Area Review process that could result in key strategic decisions having to be made, there is a need for continuity in terms of membership and leadership of the Corporation during 2016-17.

John Bolt's current term of office expires 16 December 2016 and the proposal to is to re-appoint John for a further term of office.

In addition, the proposal is for John Bolt to be appointed the Chair of the Corporation for the academic year 2016-17, with the additional brief to oversee the Area Review process and the potential strategic alliance.

To support the Chair during this critical period, the proposal is two have two Vice Chairs – Simon Wilcox and Tommy White. Simon would have specific responsibility for the line management of the new Principal and the overseeing of the transitional period (as is the current arrangement). Tommy to have specific responsibility for deputising for the Chair in any period of absence and to provide support to the Chair.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) To reappoint Mr John Bolt to serve another term of office:
- (ii) To appoint Mr John Bolt to be the Chair of the Corporation for the period 01 August 2016 to 3 July 2017; and
- (iii) To appoint Simon Wilcox and Tommy White to be the Vice Chairs for the period 01 August 2016 to 31 July 2017

64 Any Other Business

It was agreed to note the letter that had been received from Heathrow in relation to supporting Heathrow's plans for expansion.

65 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 12 October 2016 @ 1800.

The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SUMMARY ACTION LIST

MIN	ACTION	REVIEW
58	West Thames College Nursery and North Isleworth Children's Centre: To delegate through Chairs Action the approval authority to the Chair of the Corporation and Mr Simon Wilcox. Any use of Chairs Action to be reported back to the Corporation.	12/10/16

59(ii)	Development Plan 2016-17: Specific objectives and measureable targets to be approved	12/10/16
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