

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation of West Thames College
Held on Thursday 19 July 2018 in the Banks Room**

Members Present Mr S Wilcox (Chair) Ms T Aust Ms A Patterson
 Ms C Ajit Singh Mr J Bryant Mr J Bolt
 Ms M Harpley Mr A Hillman Mr T White

Also present Mr J Allen Mr M Cooper Mr G Baker
 Mr D Evans Mr M Michaelides

The meeting commenced at 18.00

1 APOLOGIES, QUORACY & FAREWELLS

Apologies were received from Mr Alan Ward, Ms Katrin Lehmann and Mr B Armstrong.

The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate.

This was to be the last meeting attended by Mary Harpley. The Chair, on behalf of the Corporation, thanked Mary for her contributions since joining the Board in 2012.

The Chair confirmed that the Local Borough of Hounslow has been asked to put forward a nomination for the Corporation to consider.

Mr David Evans, newly appointed Vice Principal, was welcomed to his first meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declared interests against any agenda item.

3. GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT

The Corporation approved the appointment of Alan Hillman to serve as a governor for the period 19 July 2018 to 18 July 2022. Alan was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held 21 March 2018 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

5 SUMMARY ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING

The 'Summary Action List' was received. The following updates were made available against each outstanding action point from the previous meeting:

Ref & Date	Action	Review Update 19 July 2018
5 07/03/18	- It was AGREED to share the staff notification with Governors, and to circulate to Governors any further staff notifications given this would be a good way of keeping Governors informed on the improvements being made.	Completed - circulated on 22/3 after the last Corporation meeting
5 07/03/18	- A follow up PIAP will be made available in the summer term for the academic year 2018-19.	Discussed and reviewed at the May Quality & Equality Meeting

		To be reviewed by the Quality & Equality Committee in June and to be approved at the July Corporation meeting	
5(ii) 21/03/18	-	The targets to be set for teaching, learning and assessment to be reported at the May meeting of the Quality & Equality Committee.	Discussed and reviewed at the May Quality & Equality Meeting
5(ii) 21/3/18	-	It was AGREED that the headings of the proposed six KPIs are the correct headings, but what is now NEEDED are the measurements and trends for each KPI.	Agenda item
5(ii) 21/03/18	-	It was also NOTED that more detailed KPIs would be made available to the Committees to enable them to monitor College performance in those areas of the College that fall within the Committee's remit to monitor.	On-going
5(ii) 21/03/18	-	Governors WELCOMED the visual presentation of the Data Dashboard, subject to the following ADDITIONS : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The inclusion of a headline commentary section ➤ The need to include comparison data against performance for the previous year ➤ The need to include comparison against published benchmark data ➤ The need to show through trend lines in-year performance 	Agenda item
5(ii) 21/03/18	-	The Chair sought confirmation as to when the Data Dashboard would be made available to the Corporation and it was CONFIRMED the final Data Dashboard would be available for the July Corporation meeting	Agenda item
5(ii) 21/03/18	-	In terms of the future monitoring of College performance, and to avoid duplication, the following monitoring framework was AGREED : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. To monitor College performance through the agreed KPIs and for the KPIs to be a standing agenda item at each meeting II. To monitor College performance through the review at each Corporation meeting the 'Post Inspection Action Plan' III. To receive any required exceptional reporting against the 	On-going

	Development Plan through the Executive Team Report IV. To receive at the autumn term the final Development Plan for the year-end, and at the autumn term meeting, to agree the Development Plan for the proceeding academic year.	
6-21/03/18	In terms of GDPR, the Clerk confirmed legal advice is being sought to ensure that the current protection on governor liability will also apply to GDPR. It was AGREED to inform the Corporation on the legal advice received.	Any update to be made available at the meeting
6-21/03/18	It was AGREED to ask the internal auditors to conduct an audit on GDPR compliance and for the outcomes of the audit to be reported to the Audit Committee.	Scheduled
6-21/03/18	'Funding & Compliance' title to be AMENDED to 'Funding & Compliance'.	Completed
6-21/03/18	The achievement data to be presented in tabular format with a column to be added to show the 2016-17 out-turn against the soon to be published national benchmark data, and for this to be made available to governors via email.	On-going
8-21/03/18	Governors acknowledged that the year-end operating surplus is forecast to exceed the set budget and would not therefore be averse to some of the additional surplus being used for additional marketing spends.	To receive any update
11-21/03/18	To RAG colour code target dates in the PIAP to enable governors to identify those dates that have been met (Green), or are still in progress (Amber); or have not been met (Red).	Completed
11-21/03/18	The Principal outlined the timeline for the review of the self-assessment process with the review commencing in May. Governors sought ASSURANCES that the Curriculum & Quality Committee will be part of the review process, and it was CONFIRMED that this would be the case with progress updates and outcomes of the review to be presented to the June meeting of the Committee	Completed - the Quality & Equality Committee will hold the SAR validation meeting on 10 October 2018
11-21/03/18	Governance weakness section in the PIAP: It was AGREED to delegate authority	Completed

	for completing this section of the PIAP to the Chair of the Quality & Equality Committee, the Chair of the Corporation and the Clerk. It was agreed to add a commentary on the agreed actions as to their implementation and for the actions to be added to the minutes of this meeting as well as the PIAP.	
11/2017-18	The target date for going 'live' on the portal is by the July Corporation meeting.	Agenda item

6. FE COMMISSIONER'S DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT REPORT

The FEC Diagnostic assessment that took place on 09 and 10 May was much broader in scope than an Ofsted inspection in that the College's financial performance and status was subject to a similar level of scrutiny as curriculum and quality matters. Feedback generally was very positive, with the FEC team reporting the following.

- The College has good financial health
- The College's financial position is stable and this is predicted to continue
- Projected surpluses, whilst below the recommended target of 3-5% of income, are positive and EBITDA is particularly strong
- Staff costs as a percentage of income are broadly in line with sector averages
- Borrowing is high but is not a concern if the College is able to maintain its strong operating cash generation
- The College acted promptly by adjusting in-year costs to mitigate successfully the disappointing drop in income in 2017-18
- Income growth assumptions for 2018-19 and 2019-20 have been carefully considered but may prove optimistic
- Given its comfortable cash reserve the College can afford to take a more ambitious approach, but its strategy to maintain that cash reserve at its current level may suggest a more cautious approach
- The College strategy to maintain a prudent cash balance provides good financial resilience
- Financial reporting and controls are good
- The College has a comprehensive audit and risk management process and audit reports provide valuable assurance and raise no significant issues

Overall, the approach to financial matters being taken by the College was endorsed with the following actions being recommended to help secure financial sustainability.

- The board and senior leadership team should consider whether it prefers an ambitious or more cautious approach to learner recruitment targets for 2018/19 and beyond. A robust sensitivity analysis with a worst case, best case and most likely scenarios would inform this judgement
- The College could build on its successful use of curriculum planning for resource allocation by further developing its curriculum area

accounts and contribution analysis in line with good practice in the sector

- An update to the college space utilisation data by conducting a full room survey would be of value in determining future priorities
- The college should consider making application to the Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF)
- The ESFA should continue to monitor routinely the college's financial position

All recommendations are reported on in the Development Plan, PIAP or the Executive Report (later agenda items). Implementation of the recommendations will be monitored by the Corporation and, where appropriate, by the committees of the Corporation.

The report endorsed the approach being taken by the College.

In conclusion, Governor's welcomed the positive assessments and outcomes arising from the visit as confirmed in the report.

7 MONITORING OF COLLEGE PERFORMANCE & CORPORATION KPIs

(i) Development Plan & Monitoring of College Performance

The College report '*Development Plan 2017/18: Key Objectives Progress Report*' was received (Paper 4). The paper provided Governors with a summary progress update against each of the key strategic objectives from the College's Development Plan 2017/18, under the three key headings 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 overall assessment on Goal 1 will not be completed until year-end results have been confirmed, therefore the current assessment is 'Amber'.

Goal 2 will not be fully completed until reported on at the October Board meeting.

For Goal 3, most of these are completed and those not completed, such as commercial income, will be carried forward.

The final review to be conducted at the October Board meeting.

It was agreed to **NOTE** the Development Plan.

Following the Governors' Strategic Planning Session in May, it was agreed to maintain a separate PIAP for 2018-19. This would be based on the progress made in 2017-18 and will focus on Goal 1 objectives. It was confirmed the key focus on the PIAP 2018/19 will continue to be on teaching, learning and assessment, and to maintain a focus on the following areas:

- Attendance
- Engagement in learning, meeting individual needs, assessment and progress, English & maths and personal development, behaviour and welfare (PDBW)
- Achievement rate targets – broken down by provision type
- A focus on underperforming areas (level, curriculum section)
- Work Experience and students' experience of work related opportunities for Programmes of Study

The Development Plan 2018-19 will focus on Goal 2 (To be innovative and responsive to current and future needs of our communities), and Goal 3 (To provide an excellent environment and resources).

(ii) Corporation KPIs/Data Dashboard

At the special Corporation strategy meeting held in January, the following six KPIs were proposed for monitoring at each meeting of the Corporation:

- **Attendance** – broken down by Provision Type (PoS, Adults, Apps, HNS, 14-16. Could have E&M as a separate category). Further detail would be available by directorate, curriculum area, by level.
- **Timely Achievement** - broken down by Provision Type as above but again with E&M as a separate category.
- **Progress** - broken down by Provision Type
- **Teaching, Learning and Assessment**
 - 5 measures interim grades
 - Learning walks – red/amber/green proportions
- **Operating Surplus**
- **Performance v Allocation**
 - 16-18 numbers v allocation
 - Income v AEB allocation

The paper outlined the narrative that will be based on each KPI. The Data Dashboard, when fully developed, will show performance (live data) against the KPIs that the Board has agreed to monitor at each meeting.

It was reported that a fully operational KPI/Data Dashboard will be 'live' and available for the October Board meeting.

It was noted that, as the KPI Data Dashboard is still under development, the Board is not in a position to form a judgement on the KPIs that were agreed for the Board to monitor, other than what is reported on in the PIAP, Development Plan, and the various reports to the committees.

Although the Board noted the progress being made in the development of the KPI Data Dashboard, there was, however, disappointment expressed that the final 'live' KPI Data Dashboard has yet to be made available. To enhance the Board's ability to discharge its responsibility of monitoring College performance, and to address the criticism of the Board made by Ofsted, it is essential for the KPI Data Dashboard to be fully functional in time for the October Board meeting. This will enable the Board to have in place a robust monitoring framework for the 2018-19 academic year and beyond.

The updates were **NOTED**.

8 EXECUTIVE TEAM REPORT

The Executive Team Report provided Members with updates on the following topics:

- Financial Matters
- FE Commissioners Visit
- Partnership Updates
- Leadership & Management Updates
- Quality
- Strategic planning
- Careers Update
- Employer Engagement
- News updates

Given financial matters, the FEC visit and report, strategic planning and quality matters are covered through separate agenda items; the focus of discussion was on partnership updates and changes to leadership and management.

The following key points were noted from the report.

(i) Institutes of Technology (IoT)

A joint expression of interest (EoI) was submitted in the autumn term with Ealing Hammersmith West London College and the University of West London for an IoT. Following this, feedback was received from the DfE and the GLA that colleges needed to cluster their bids in response to the high volume of EoIs that were received. The College submitted a bid as part of a wider cluster but the bid was not successful. The College will continue to explore and respond to other partnership opportunities, bringing any such opportunities to Governors for consideration.

(ii) London School of Basketball (LSB)

The College has entered into a partnership agreement for the period of one year with the LSB. The arrangement will be similar to the existing partnership that the College has with Brentford Community Sports Trust. The intention is that the LSB will work with the College to deliver basketball qualifications at levels 1 and 2 to full time students. LSB works with other Colleges but they have no such provision in West London. The College already has a strong basketball enrichment programme which would be further enhanced by working in partnership with LSB. In the first year, the College is targeting 20 students and this should lead to 20 new 16-18s year olds for the College. Through the Executive Report, Governors will be kept updated on this new partnership venture.

(iii) AaA / The Rise Sixth Form

As part of the on-going relationship with AaA, the College has been asked whether there is space to accommodate a new Sixth Form provision for the Rise School (part of the AaA group). The School is currently co-located with Springwest Academy in Feltham and they do not currently have Sixth Form provision. This will be considered as part of the room utilisation survey that is planned to be carried out in the Autumn term.

(iv) WPES

The school has recently approached the College with a request to provide a security service to help support their staff with managing student behaviour and/or incidents that occur within the school.

The College currently has an existing 0.5 FTE vacancy based at the Skills + Logistics Centre and the school has now agreed to provide the funding for an additional 0.5 FTE. This will create a new 1.0 FTE post, resulting in 2 x full time security assistants, who will remain based at the College and provide a managed service to the school as needed. The new service will start from September 2018, and run for an initial fixed term of 12 months. An SLA is currently under development and will be agreed before the end of July 2018.

(v) Aramark

In February 2018, Aramark raised concerns in terms of their sales figures which, at that point in time, were considerably lower than they were in the previous year. The College signed a 5 year contract with Aramark in December 2014, which was based on a nil-cost model.

In May 2018, Aramark announced that sales were continuing to decline and served notice to the College that they wished to terminate the contract early, with a 3-month notice period as per the contract. The Executive is currently liaising with the College's legal team to agree the next steps.

(vi) SCIF

One of the observations made from the FEC visit was that the College should submit a bid to the Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF) in the next available round. Details of the new SCIF were published on 06 July, with a deadline of 27 July for part 1. The Executive plan to submit a bid and for attendance to be the area identified for development. The bid proposal will include the strategies to be used to improve attendance and the measures that will be used to measure 'impact'. The SCIF requires a partner College with which to work.

The Board **ENDORSED** the proposal to submit a SCIF application with attendance being the feature of the bid.

The Executive Report was **NOTED**.

9 GOVERNORS' PORTAL

A visual presentation was made on how 'live' data reporting will feature in the Governors' Portal.

As discussed earlier, It was reported that a fully operational KPI/Data Dashboard will be 'live' and available for the October Board meeting.

10 TEACHING & QUALITY FOCUS

The following reports were received:

- (i) The minutes of the Quality & Equality Advisory Group that met on 02 May 2017;

- (ii) To receive the minutes of the Quality & Equality Advisory Group that met on 13 June 2018
- (iii) To receive for information the PIAP that was subject to review by the Committee

The final achievement rate for 2016-17 was 87% which is a 5% increase on the achievement rate in 2015-16 and is 3% above the National Rate (NR) of 84%. This places West Thames College achievement rates for 2016-17, when ranked against 25 London Colleges, as follows:

- 8th for all ages – upper 50th percentile
- 8th for 16-18 students – upper 50th percentile
- 4th for 19+ - upper 25th percentile
- 4th level 1 16-18 and 19+ upper 25th percentile
- 2nd level 3 all ages upper 10th percentile
- Of concern, is level 2 – which is in the lower 50th percentile overall

In terms of apprenticeships, in 2016-17, there were 131 timely leavers. The 2016-17 timely achievement rate was 44% which is 22% above the timely achievement rate for 2015-16. Although this shows a significant improvement, it is still below the NR of 64%. The overall achievement rate for apprenticeships is 59% which is an increase of 2% when compared to 2015-16.

In terms of key areas for Improvements required, the following will be key priorities for the Development Plan 2018-19.

- Further improve achievement rates for English and maths GCSE (A*-C/ 4-9) and Functional Skills for all ages (78% FS achievement in 2016-17). Of particular concern is achievement at level 1 and level 2.
- Increase timely achievement rates for apprenticeships
- Continue to improve achievement rates for all students on level 2 courses including the functional skills element of the programme
- Increase the number of 16-18 year old students who achieve high grades at level 3 to at least 40% (33% in 2016-17)
- Bring underperforming areas up to required standards including Health and Care, Construction, Travel, Sports and Public Services, Work and Study courses for 19+

The reports presented under this agenda item were **NOTED**.

11 **FINANCE & ESTATES FOCUS**

The following reports were received:

- (i) Minutes of the Finance & Capital Advisory Group that met on 20 June 2018
- (ii) Management Accounts
- (iii) College Budget 2018/19
- (iv) Two Year Financial Plan

It was confirmed the Management Accounts, College Budget 2018-19, and Two Year Financial Plan were subject to a thorough review from the Committee.

The Management Accounts forecast an operating surplus of £580k (2.9% of

income) compared with budget of £450k. The projected surplus excludes £145k general non-pay contingency which, if not required, would improve the forecast surplus to £725k.

The Corporation reviewed in detail the assumptions made in the commentary in the College Budget 2018/19 and the Two-Year Financial Forecasts, the sensitivities and key risks identified, and the impact of the risks.

The economic climate in which the budget and plan had been prepared continued to be difficult with funding rates for students of all ages unchanged – a cut in real terms – and no indication yet that this will improve across the forecast period. Conversely, inflation rates are rising and there are increasing pressures on pay costs.

The College will receive over £0.5m less 16-19 programme funding in 2018-19 as it under-achieved against its 2017-18 student number allocation. This decrease, coupled with a drop of similar value in 17-18 HE fee income, and a HE grant funding cut of £100k, has put additional pressure to achieve a balanced budget. The College has planned to offset these income reductions by thorough review of the staffing cost base and non-pay costs across the College to make savings where possible. The Executive has also planned for increases in full-cost courses and other commercial income, Apprenticeships growth, and some recovery of fee income from HE students.

A pay award of 1% has been incorporated in the 2018-19 budget and financial plan to July 2020 at additional cost of approximately £130k per annum. This is subject to Corporation approval.

Increased staff costs are due to a combination of volume increases arising from incremental costs associated with planned income growth and price inflation due to the assumed pay award and payment of annual increments.

A revenue budget and plan are presented with a projected surplus of £200k in 2018-19 and £250k in 2019-20. The risks underpinning the budget were summarised in the report and were confirmed as follows:

- Failure to recruit planned student numbers leading to a revenue budget deficit
- Inability of the college to draw down the full Adult Education Budget allocation and do this cost effectively.
- Inability of in-house teams to deliver planned growth in commercial income and apprenticeship provision
- Threat of increased competition from HE institutions and potential impact on HE fee income to be collected from students and from HE Franchise partners
- Low take up and impact of Advanced Learner Loans on fee income from adults
- Failure of subcontractors to deliver planned funding targets.
- Staff costs/numbers estimates may be underestimated, particularly in areas where changes in operation are envisaged

The calculated Financial Health Grade for the forecast period as per the ESFA template is 'Outstanding' in 2017-18 and 'Good' in 2018-19 and 2019-20.

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

- (i) The College Revenue & Expenditure Budget 2018/19 and the 1% pay award factored into the budget; and
- (ii) The Two-Year Financial Forecasts 2019/20 and 2020/21

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 20 June 2018.

The Commercial Strategy is still under development and will be an objective in the Development Plan 2018-19. When available, it will be referred to the Finance Committee for review and approval.

12 AUDIT FOCUS

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held 21 June 2018,

It was noted the Committee approved the Financial Statement & regularity Audit for the year-end accounts 31 July 2018.

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

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held 21 June 2018.

13 GOVERNANCE FOCUS

Nominations were also sought for the position of Chair and nominations were received for Simon Wilcox. No other nominations were received.

Nominations were also sought for the position of Vice Chair and nominations were received for Tommy White. No other nominations were received.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (i) To appoint Mr Simon Wilcox to be the Chair of the Corporation for the period 01 August 2018 to 31 July 2019; and
- (ii) To appoint Tommy White to be the Vice Chair for the period 01 August 2018 to 31 July 2019.

Meeting dates for 2018-19 were received and **NOTED**.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18 October 2018 @ 1800.

Meeting closed at 19.40

SUMMARY ACTION LIST

Ref & Date	Action	Review
7(i)	Development Plan 2017-18 - The final review to be conducted at the October Board meeting	18/10/18
7(i)	The PIAP 2018-19 to focus on Goal 1. The Development Plan 2018-19 to focus on Goal 2 (To be innovative and responsive to current and future needs of our communities), and Goal 3 (To provide an excellent environment and resources).	18/10/18
7(ii)	The final review to be conducted at the October Board meeting	18/10/18
11	The Commercial Strategy is still under development and will be an objective in the Development Plan 2018-19. When available, it will be referred to the Finance Committee for review and approval.	Target date for completion to be confirmed in the Development Plan 2018-19