



West Thames College Further Education Corporation

Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation

held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 17 January 2024
at the College

Present:	Mr S McGeoch (SM)	Chair
	Ms T Aust (TA)	CEO
	Mr A Barke (AB)	
	Mr S Taylor (ST)	
	Ms R Turner (RT)	
	Mr P Sullivan (PS)	
	Ms A Cornish (AC)	
	Mr T Hayhoe (TH)	
	Mr G Casley (GC)	
	Mr A Rides (AR)	
Apologies:	Mr A Smith (AS)	
	Ms T Kaur (TK)	
	Mr A Alimohamed (AA)	
In Attendance:	Mr J Bolt (JB)	Associate Member
	Ms C Ajit Singh (CS)	Associate Member
	Mr B Armstrong (BA)	Associate Member
	Ms K Frost (KF)	Head of Governance
	Mr K Evans (KE)	Interim Executive Director
	Mr M Cooper (MC)	Executive Director
	Ms M Gajewska-Kopczyk (MGK)	Vice Principal
	Ms L Owen (LO)	Head of HR and Professional Development

1/24 **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting highlighting this was the first of two strategy days this year, with this one being largely about the current context and the later one being more forward looking.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from AA, AS and TK. There were no declarations of interest concerning items on the agenda.

2/24 **Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF)**

Andrew Dakers, from West London Business, gave a presentation about the Local Skills Improvement Plan. The presentation included the West London context, the London Local Skills Improvement Plan, an employment and skills overview, sectors that inspire young

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people, Gatsby benchmarks data, workstreams delivering the priorities, apprenticeship routes and sectoral leadership/co-ordination.

Governors asked what the trend was in terms of the number of unemployed in the local area and whether the College could tap into that. AL said the number of unemployed in the region had dropped since the pandemic but the number had started to coast for a number of different reasons. The CEO explained the College worked with other organisations to support the unemployed back into work in a number of different ways. It was noted that there was a difference between the employment opportunities available and the opportunities students were interested in.

Governors asked what the link was between the students and the hubs. AL said it varied depending on which stage of development each hub was at. Meaningful local information hadn't yet been aggregated and given to careers leaders.

Governors asked what success would look like in a year. AL said this year was about starting to bring in some new provision which would require new training facilities. As the training provider community built up there would be a need to engage with the employer community.

Governors asked whether all local players were being engaged. AL said work was underway to identify where the gaps were.

Governors asked to what extent transferable skills were being considered. The CEO said transferable skills ran throughout the LSIP as a cross cutting theme. Students were given the opportunity to meet with employers and hear directly how important transferable skills were.

Governors asked whether employers were being given feedback from students about why they weren't interested in certain sectors. AL said the process had started and feedback was being passed onto employers about why their opportunities weren't attractive.

Governors asked how the voluntary sector was being involved in the LSIP. AL said a number of voluntary organisations were acting as intermediaries supporting the process.

Governors said a number of students were interested in becoming entrepreneurs and asked how that fitted into the LSIP. AL said entrepreneurship was an area that could be further developed.

Governors asked about the role of Higher Education, whether Higher Education organisations were linking with the hubs and if any higher apprenticeship routes had been developed. AL confirmed that some Higher Education organisations were linking with the hubs. The CEO said there was a clear map locally of programmes and work was underway to address any gaps.

Governors asked whether students were able to interrogate the information available. The CEO said the hubs were getting better at this. In College, students could find out information about opportunities through their Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance sessions, meetings with employability coaches and the tutorial provision. At school, students received Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance. There was still a gap in terms of students being aware of Post 16 options.

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Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF)

Rena Rani, the LSIF Project Manager, gave a presentation about the LSIF going through each of the three areas and progress towards the Key Performance Indicators and the challenges and opportunities. On the whole the project was on track with no significant risks.

Governors asked how the projects linked to the hubs. RR explained the logistics hub was working very closely with the logistics project, in particular, discussions were underway about making pathways clearer to students. The CEO explained that the hubs worked together to identify what needed to go into the bid for the LSIF. Moving forward, targets coming out of the LSIFs would be linked to the targets coming out of hubs.

Governors thanked AL and RR for the presentations.

3/24 Risk Register

Governors reviewed the new risk register that had been received in advance of the meeting. The risk register would continue to develop over the course of the next year.

Risks had been assigned to individual sub-committees and these committees were requested to review and propose updates to their risks as deemed necessary as part of that ongoing development process.

Two additional risks were proposed, on teaching quality (as related to staff quality, attraction and retention) and safeguarding.

4/24 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Nylah Ali and Hayley Igbokwe, from the Association of Colleges, gave a training session on EDI.

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