

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation of West Thames College
Held on Wednesday 11 December 2019 in the Banks Room**

Members Present Mr S Wilcox (Chair) Ms T Aust Mr A Luke
 Mr J Bolt Dr B Armstrong Ms B Sandhu
 Mr M Malhorta Mr J Bryant Ms C Ajit Singh

Also present Mr J Allen Mr M Cooper Ms S Davies

The meeting commenced at 18.00

1. APOLOGIES, QUORACY, ANNOUNCEMENTS & WELCOME

Apologies were received from Mr T White and Mr J Makondele. The absence of the other student governor, Ms S Oloyede, was noted.

The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate.

2. GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the governor appointment of Mr Alex Luke for the period 11 December 2019 to 10 December 2023. Mr Luke was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made. It was confirmed Mr Luke would be a member of the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee.

3. VICE CHAIR APPOINTMENT

It was **AGREED** to have a second Vice Chair and it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Mr Bruce Armstrong to the position of Vice Chair up to 31 July 2020. It was noted the Chair and Vice Chair are annual appointments conducted at the summer term meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declared interests against any agenda item.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held 16 October 2019 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting (Paper 1)

6. SUMMARY ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING

The 'Summary Action List' was received (Paper 2). The following updates were made available against each outstanding action point from the previous meeting:

Ref & Date	Action	Review Update 11 December 2019
5	As there is a risk to the forecast 2020-21 budget due to lower than anticipated enrolments, it was AGREED for this risk to be kept under review by the Finance Committee at its November meeting and the Corporation at its December meeting.	Reviewed by Finance, Resources & Capital Projects Committee meeting held 14/11/19
9	Governor Link Visits: It was AGREED for the Clerk to make	Email sent to all

	<p>available to governors the agreed guidelines for conducting visits and learning walks and for the guidelines to incorporate the governor link allocations for 2019/20.</p> <p>Governors are ASKED to conduct their visit/learning walk after the SAR validation meeting that is held in November and before the end of February, to enable a summary report (to be collated by the Chair of the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee) of all visits to be presented to the March Corporation meeting.</p> <p>It was confirmed the Principal's PA will organise the visit schedule for governors.</p>	<p>governors 17/10/19</p> <p>Being actioned by the Principal's PA</p>
10	<p>West Thames Governors to be subject to DBS checks and for HR to advise and oversee the required process</p>	<p>Being processed by HR. Email and letter notifications were sent to all governors on 22/11/19.</p>

Clarification was sought on the process to be followed in the event that an adverse DBS is received for a governor. It was confirmed that if the matter disclosed was not deemed to be serious, HR would conduct a risk assessment on the individual. If serious, the Chair and Clerk would follow-up with a meeting with the individual concerned to confirm their appointment was no longer permissible.

7. **STRUCTURE OF THE AGENDA AND MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION**

The Chair outlined the new approach to be used for this and future Corporation meetings.

The main business of the Corporation is to determine the educational character of the College and to ensure its overall wellbeing, success and financial solvency.

Ultimately it is the Corporation that is fully accountable for the College and therefore the Corporation must be seen to be directing and leading the Executive to deliver against the strategic objectives agreed by the Corporation.

As agreed in the Corporation's Scheme of Delegation, the focus of Corporation meetings is:

- To monitor College performance against agreed headline KPIs
- To deal with strategic matters including the review of the Executive Report

- To deal with any non-delegable duties and statutory compliance duties
- To receive Committee reports (primarily for information purposes)

The Chair confirmed the agenda for Corporation meetings will follow the same format being used for this meeting for the first time, this being:

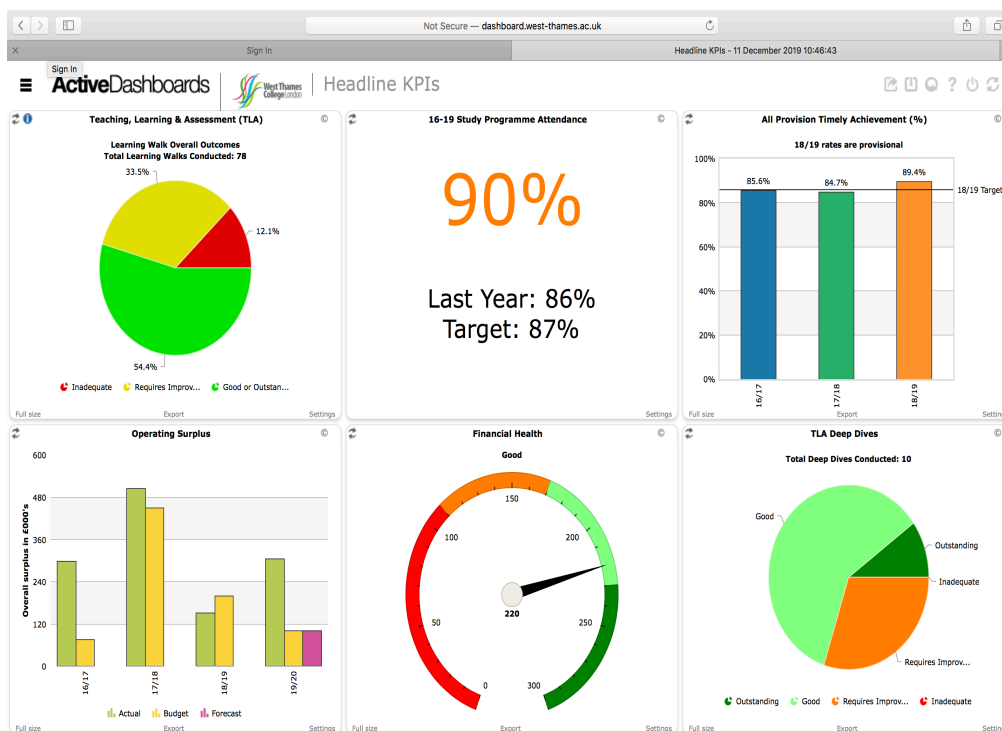
- Monitoring of College Performance - Data Dashboard Review, Development Plan, and Post Inspection Action Plan
- Strategic matters including the review of the Executive Report
- Agenda items that fall within non-delegable duties (As listed in Article 3.1) and statutory and or compliance duties;
- Committee Reporting.

In terms of Committee reporting, Committees at the end of each meeting are required to identify the points/issues/risks that need to be brought to the attention of the Corporation. The Chair of the Committee and Clerk will make available a summary report for the Board, and this to include any actions subsequently taken after the meeting. Minutes from the meeting to be attached to the summary report (along with any other key documents considered by the Committee that the Committee agrees should be made available to the Board), but the key document for the Corporation to consider is the Committee's summary document.



MONITORING COLLEGE PERFORMANCE

8. Monitoring College Performance (i) Data Dashboard Review

The following headline KPIs were presented to the Corporation through the Data Dashboard that is accessed via the Governors Portal:



Made available for the meeting was the Executive's review of emerging headlines from the Data Dashboard and the next steps to be taken to either address areas identified as requiring improvements or next steps to build on existing strengths.

KPI			Next Steps
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole College 16-19 Study Programmes (90%) • All directorates ahead of full-year target and at or above 2018-19 YTD 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue College attendance strategy to maintain year-on-year improvement • Reward students for 100% attendance (or attendance that exceeds target)
Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Classroom Learning Timely achievement at 90% • 16-18 Study Programmes (86%) v National Rate (81%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships - Timely 42%; overall 51% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement recommendations from written reports added to QIPs for each area. • More accurate forecast achievement contributing to Improved achievement rates
TLA - Learning Walks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of LWs undertaken (78) • 54% 'Green' LWs • Behaviour & Attitudes - 92% 'Green' or 'Amber' (75% target) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment - Target is for full year; this area should improve as the year progresses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement Plans - Implement individual improvement plans for all teachers with appropriate support and monitoring.
TLA Deep Dives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' • Performing Arts – Grade 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% rated 'Requires Improvement' - Science and Access; Supported Learning; Travel, Sport & Public Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement recommendations from written reports added to QIPs for each area • Monitor progress - Formal monitoring through quality visits and LWs in term 2
Financial Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Good' grade for 2018-19 outturn (Score of 220/300) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debt relatively high but servicing bank loan comfortably 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor financial performance in year to deliver as budgeted

Performance vs Funding Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Education Budget - 2018-19 funded over-delivery of £97k received in Dec-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16-19 Programme Funding - Continued drop in student numbers (third consecutive year). • 2019-20 under-recruitment of around 100 students (c. £530k) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push in-year recruitment activity - January-start courses • 2019-20 development plan objectives - Focus on internal progression and conversion of external applicants
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It was confirmed that work is in hand by the executive to ensure the opening page on the data dashboard is reviewed in a timely manner to provide governors with the latest and accurate information. It was confirmed this would be in place for the next corporation meeting.

The Corporation noted and welcomed confirmation that attendance at the Skills + Logistics Centre has significantly improved. As previously discussed at Corporation meetings, attendance has been an area of concern at the Skills + Logistics Centre. Staff and managers at the Skills + Logistics Centre have worked hard to introduce a range of strategies taken from the SCIF project that focused on improving attendance through partnership work with East Kent College. A range of new initiatives were introduced with a strong focus being on individual learners through extra support and monitoring whilst also rewarding excellent attendance.

As forecasting apprenticeship achievement outcomes has been an issue in the past, the Corporation sought assurances on the robustness of actions being taken to ensure there is more accurate forecast achievement contributing to improved achievement rates. In reply it was confirmed there is now in place more frequent performance review meetings between the Director of Finance and the Head of Apprenticeships. This has resulted in a firmer understanding on the progress of each apprentice. In the past in-year results have been greatly affected by previous legacy issues. There still remains a small legacy issue but this will not have such an impact on current in-year achievement as it has over the last two years.

Since September the College has carried out twelve deep dives, ten of which have been completed and two of which are work in progress. The deep dives that replicate Ofsted's new approach on conducting inspections, is an intensive review of a curriculum area that consists of:

- Learning Walk
- Meetings with CQTM's
- Meetings with teachers
- Meetings with students
- A review of the self-assessment of the area
- A sample of marked work
- A review of student targets

Of the ten deep dives completed so far, 70% have been good or outstanding and 30% requires improvement. Governors were given assurances that the % of requires improvement is due to the College's approach of having greater rigour to move towards outstanding and

excellence, and must not be viewed as reflecting below standard curriculum. The Executive has raised the bar on performance and the goal is to have excellence in all curriculum area. Deep Dives are being used as a key measure towards excellence.

The Director of Finance apologised to governors for not making available in the Data Dashboard current financial data within the required 7-day notice. The aim is to update the Data Dashboard on a monthly basis to meet the requirement of the Further Education Commissioner for governors to receive monthly management accounts. The Director of Finance and Principal are meeting next week to agree the timetable and timeframe for uploading management accounts onto the Data Dashboard. It was **AGREED** to make available to governors the agreed timetable and timeframe for uploading monthly Management Accounts.

Governors asked if there were any issues of concern on current financial performance that needs to be brought to their attention. In reply it was stated that the forecast year-end outturn of a surplus of £100k is in line with the agreed budget as was reported to the recent meeting of the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee.

The key area for continuous monitoring is the Adult Education Budget especially with the increased funding allocation given to the College for 2019-20. Weekly meetings are taking place to monitor performance against the Adult Education Budget.

With the reduction in 16-19 year olds, governors sought assurances that savings have been put in place before lag funding impacts on the 2020-21 budget. It was confirmed a range of savings have already been put in place and that savings will continue to be made wherever possible. It was noted the expected reduction in 16-19 funding for 2020-21 of circa £530k will to a degree be offset by the announced increase in funding per student for 2020-21 and the announced funding uplift for certain subjects.

To reduce the borrowing requirements, it was asked if the current loan with the College's bank can be renegotiated on more favourable terms? In response it was stated that the break clause is so severe that the break costs involved would outweigh any possible savings that may arise from a new loan arrangement. Governors were given assurances that the current bank loan is subject to annual review by the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee. As reported in the Data Dashboard, the key message for governors is that although the debt is relatively high the College is able to service the bank loan comfortably.

(ii) Development Plan and Post Inspection Action Plan

It was noted the Post Inspection Action Plan has been covered in detail through the review of the Data Dashboard in the area of teaching, learning and assessment.

The following was noted from the review of the Development Plan.

Action 2.4 - Ensure enrolment in-year and recruitment activities planned for 2019-20 recruitment, secure student numbers to meet allocations with

timely actions taken in any areas of concern. To address this it was confirmed the College has made changes to the student's recruitment cycle to increase applications as well as conversion of application to enrolment. This includes new Open Events, Taster Day structures as well as Welcome Sessions being introduced across the College. A new marketing plan is under development to improve marketing techniques used across various campaigns.

Action 3.1 - Provide a highly skilled workforce to meet the current and future demands of the curriculum, supporting the College's drive to provide outstanding teaching, learning and assessment. The Corporation noted and welcomed confirmation that the College's Staff Well-Being Strategy is currently under review and is being informed by external good practice. Staff will be involved in shaping both the strategy and the corresponding staff development programme. A progress update will be made available at the next meeting of the Corporation.

Action 3.6 - Develop a robust and sustainable 3-5 year strategic plan for the College. It was confirmed this would be made available for review at the Strategy & Business Development Committee meeting on 31 January 2020.

9. Strategic matters including the review of the Executive Report

(i) Executive Report

The Executive Report provided updates on:

- Ofsted
- AoC Annual Conference
- Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF) - Final Visit
- The S+LC Lease
- Recruitment Targets
- Pay Award
- Leadership & Management Staffing Update
- Achievement Rates 2018-19
- Partnerships
- Student News, Winning Awards and College Events this term

The Executive Report confirmed current partnership arrangements are enhancing the student experience as well as providing financial benefits to the College. Work will continue to enhance current partnership arrangements and to explore new opportunities.

The report confirmed a new collaboration opportunity with the Mayor's Construction Academy. As part of the College's collaboration with other west London Colleges and employers, the College has been asked to become part of the Mayor's Construction Academy (MCA) for west London. Ealing, Hammersmith. West London College have become one of the first MCA Hubs within London. The over-arching aim of these hubs is to close the skills gap in London in the construction industry. They will enable employers and education providers to work together to provide appropriately skilled construction employees and employers will have vacant roles to offer as well as work-experience placements.

To become part of the Hub the College will need to agree to and sign a Memorandum of Agreement. The Memorandum will continue for the duration of the project, ending in April 2021, and is free to be terminated by

either Party with three months written notice. There are no financial costs or liabilities with signing the Memorandum.

As participation would enable the College to maximise opportunities for construction students and to work collaboratively with other west London stakeholders, it was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Principal to sign the Memorandum of Agreement.

(ii) Other Strategic Matters

The Chair informed the meeting that the inaugural meeting of the Strategy & Business Development Committee is to be held on 31 January 2020. As this meeting needs to take place to inform the agenda for the Governor's Strategy meeting that was scheduled to be held in February, it has been agreed to defer the strategy meeting to a later date, yet to be confirmed.

NON-DELEGABLE DUTIES (ARTICLE 3.1) AND STATUTORY AND OR COMPLIANCE DUTIES

10. College Self Assessment Report 2018/19

Following the SAR Validation meeting of the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee held 06 November 2019, the Corporation is asked to review and approve the College Self Assessment Report 2018/19 (SAR).

The following grade assessments were noted as proposed in the College SAR:

Overall effectiveness	Good
Quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good

The following key strength and areas for improvement from the College SAR were noted:

Key Strengths

1. Governors, managers and all staff have driven forward key improvements. Challenging and ambitious targets for improvement, with students' learning at their heart, have led to an increased focus on performance management allied with effective staff development.
2. Staff and students from a culturally diverse catchment area (over 20 different languages are spoken by College students) collaborate to ensure robust and effective Prevent and safeguarding arrangements are seamlessly embedded in the day-to-day life of the College, shared values are actively promoted and students feel safe. High expectations of students' behaviour and conduct is relentlessly communicated through the cross-College 'Our College Expects' campaign from the start and throughout the year.
3. Teaching, learning and assessment is good and improving particularly in terms of meeting needs, assessment and progress and personal development, behaviour and welfare. Students embrace the high expectations presented to them and, as a result, develop valuable skills

including advanced practical skills which they can apply in further study and employment.

4. Very high student achievement – 90% overall for 2018-19. 16-18 achievement is 86% against a National Rate of 81% and for 19+, achievement is 92% against a National Rate of 88%. A 9% improvement in Level 2 achievement on Study Programmes from 78% in 2017-18 to 87% in 2018-19 and a further 3% improvement in the proportion of Level 3 students achieving high grades at 51%
5. Highly productive work with an extensive and diverse range of partners ensures curriculum design is relevant, meaningful and meets students' and employers' needs. A highly responsive approach to partnership activities leads to the development of highly inclusive provision that meets the needs of students.
6. A high proportion of students benefit from purposeful work-related learning, including external and extended work and industry experience. Projects, performances and productions, often assigned by or designed with employers, are of a high standard. As a result, the proportion of students that progress onto the next level, or into relevant employment or onto university is high.
7. English and maths results have improved for both functional skills and GCSEs when compared to 2017-18. Functional skills have improved by 9% (78%) and GCSEs have improved by 4% (87%).
 - Entry level achievement remains high and level 1 maths has improved by 6%.
 - In terms of GCSEs, high grades in GCSE maths rose by 1% with a 4% increase in high grades for 16-18s at 26%, which compares favourably to the National Rate for 16-18s at 18%. High grades in English for 16-18s at 26% which is in line with the National Rate.

Areas Requiring Improvement

1. Improved achievement rates in English but further improvements required in Level 1 FS, particularly for 19+
2. The successful completion of their courses by apprentices is too low, especially within the agreed timescales. Further improvement is required.
3. Students' attendance on Study Programmes is improving with a 1% improvement in 2018-19 to 86% and a 5% increase in achievement on Study Programmes. Further improvement is required.
4. Further improvements in students' engagement in learning is required with a focus on ensuring (all) lessons are planned to enable (all) students revise and repeat key concepts. This allows students to consolidate the confidence and assurance they gain in their learning and prepares them effectively for next steps. This will be secured in

2019-20 through rigorous monitoring accompanied by targeted support and professional development for teachers.

The Chair of the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee reported the staff who presented their curriculum SARs were professional in their approach and there was a consistently high level of expertise shown by all curriculum managers. It was **AGREED** to place on record the Corporation thanks to all staff for their work on curriculum SARs and the College SAR.

Following the recommendation from the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the College Self Assessment Report 2018-19.

11. Audit Committee Annual Report & Financial Statements Year-Ended 31 July 2019

The Corporation received an extract of the minutes from both the Finance, Resources & Capital Projects Committee and Audit Committee confirming the outcomes and recommendations arising from their respective reviews of the Financial Statements (Paper 5). The minutes reported on issues around accounting of holiday pay accrual and reporting on staff pay costs.

The paper was **NOTED**.

The Corporation received a report from the Director of Finance on the Issues around the accounting of holiday pay accrual and reporting on staff pay costs (Paper 6). The paper summarised the final position on these matters and the lesson learnt for the future to avoid any reoccurrence.

The paper was **NOTED**.

The Corporation received for approval the Annual Report 2018/19 from the Audit Committee that has to be considered before approval of the Financial Statements (Paper 7). The Annual Report from the Audit Committee confirmed the following annual opinion from the Committee for the attention of the Corporation and Accounting Officer (the Principal):

The Audit Committee, through review of auditors' reports and discussion with auditors and college managers, has arrived at the opinion that West Thames College has adequate and effective assurance frameworks, framework of governance, risk management and control processes for the effective use of resources, solvency of the institution and the safeguarding of its assets. The Committee is satisfied with the financial reporting of West Thames College and the performance of the internal and financial statement & regularity auditors. The Audit Committee considers that the Corporation's responsibilities have been satisfactorily discharged and recommends the Annual Report to the Corporation.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Annual Report from the Audit Committee,

The Corporation received approval the Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2019 (Paper 8). It was confirmed this was the final draft of the Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2019. The accounts show total comprehensive expenditure for the year of £2,506k compared to total comprehensive income of £2,533k in 2017-18.

Excluding movements on the defined benefit pension liability and enhanced pension provision, the underlying operating surplus is £151k.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) To **approve** the Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2019; and
- (ii) To **authorise** the Chair and Principal to sign the Report and Financial Statements on behalf of the Corporation.

COMMITTEE REPORTING

- 12. Report from the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee**
The report and minutes from the Committee covering the meeting held 06 November 2019 were received and **NOTED**.
- 13. Report from the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee**
The report and minutes from the Committee covering the meeting held 14 November 2019 were received and **NOTED**.
- 14. Report from the Audit Committee**
The report and minutes from the Committee covering the meeting held 21 November 2019 were received and **NOTED**.
- 15. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**
There was no other urgent business previously notified to either the Chair or Clerk.
- 16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Wednesday 01 April 2020 @ 1800

Signed: _____

Date: _____ -

SUMMARY ACTION LIST

Ref & Date	Action	Review
8(i)	It was confirmed that work is in hand by the executive to ensure the opening page on the data dashboard is reviewed in a timely manner to provide governors with the latest and accurate information. It was confirmed this would be in place for the next corporation meeting.	1/4/20
8(i)	To make available to governors the agreed timetable and timeframe for uploading monthly Management Accounts	1/4/20
8(ii)	A progress update to be made available at the next meeting on the review of the	1/4/20

	College's Staff Well-Being Strategy	
8(ii)	Draft of the 3-5 Year Strategic Plan to be discussed at the Strategy & Business Development Committee	1/4/20
9(ii)	The Chair informed the meeting that the inaugural meeting of the Strategy & Business Development Committee is to be held on 31 January 2020. As this meeting needs to take place to inform the agenda for the Governor's Strategy meeting that was scheduled to be held in February, it has been agreed to defer the strategy meeting to a later date, yet to be confirmed.	1/4/20