



## West Thames College Further Education Corporation

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation

held at 6.00pm on Wednesday 13 July 2022  
at the College

<b>Present:</b>	Mr S Wilcox (SW) Ms T Aust (TA) Ms C Ajit Singh (CS) Mr A Luke (AL) Mr A Barke (AB) Mr Z Haulkhory (ZH) Mr A Smith (AS) Ms B Sandhu (BS)	Chair Principal
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr B Armstrong (BA) Mr J Bryant (JB) Ms C Callinan (CC) Ms L Gomes (LG)	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr J Bolt (JB) Ms K Frost (KF) Mr M Michaelides (MM) Mr M Cooper (MC) Ms M Gajewska-Kopczyk (MGK) Mr A Alimohamed (AA) Mr S McGeoch (SM)	Associate Member Head of Governance

#### 8/22 **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Mr A Alimohamed and Mr S McGeoch who were attending the meeting as observers. Introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr B Armstrong, Mr J Bryant, Ms C Callinan and Ms L Gomes.

It was noted that the meeting was quorate.

Mr S Wilcox declared an interest in agenda item 11 'Chair and Vice Chair Appointments' and agenda item 14 'Governance Self-Assessment – Review of the Performance of the Chair'.

#### 9/22 **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

- i) Minutes from the meeting of the Corporation held on 23 March 2022 (Papers 1 and 25) were received in advance of the meeting. IT WAS DECIDED they were a true record of the meeting and they were approved.

- ii) Minutes from the meeting of the Corporation held on 11 May 2022 (Papers 2 and 26) were received in advance of the meeting. IT WAS DECIDED they were a true record of the meeting and they were approved.

## 10/22 Summary Action List and Matters Arising

The 'Summary Action List' was received (Paper 3). The following updates were made available against each outstanding action point from previous meetings:

Ref & Date	Action	Review Update
6(ii) 13/10/21	S & BD Committee to oversee a review of the Corporation's approach to risk and risk management and outcomes of the review will be reported to the Corporation.	Added to the agenda plan for the S&BD Committee.
6(ii) 13/10/21	Strategic Plan ➤ Governors' Strategy meeting in May to review ➤ Final draft to July 2022 Corporation meeting	Item on the agenda.
8 14/12/21	To receive a progress update on the succession arrangements for a new Chair to be in place from the start of the next academic year	Item on the agenda.
5 23/3/22	Succession planning for new governors, Chair and Vice Chairs	Item on the agenda.
8 23/3/22	Full Governor Link Summary Report	Item on the agenda.
15(iii) 23/3/22	To schedule in the Corporation's cycle of business an annual review of the Lease situation at the Skills + Logistics Centre.	Added to the agenda plan for the FRCP committee.
16 23/3/22	In the longer term the aim is to agree on a framework for future pay awards and to delegate to the Executive the authority to operate the framework as agreed. Any deviation to the agreed framework would then be reported to the Corporation for review and approval.	To be added to a future agenda.
4/22 11/05/22	Circulate the draft role description for the Chair of Governors and collate comments about the type of person required for the role.	Completed.

## 11/22 Monitoring of College Performance – Data Dashboard Review

### i) Data Dashboard

The following key points were noted from the review of the Data Dashboard:

#### Finance

The main change was the increase in operating surplus which was now £150,000, 0.8% of adjusted income. This was up on the previous forecast and from the budget (£100,000). The main reason for the change was the improvement in the pay cost forecast.

The Financial Health Grade had improved and was now at the top end of good with a score of 230/300 compared to the previous score of 220/300.

Governors asked whether there was anything that needed highlighting in the management accounts. MC said the main changes were the pay costs forecast and confirmation that the College would receive funding for over delivery on the Adult Education Budget. The financial position had been impacted by inflationary costs, in particular, the increase in energy costs.

### **Attendance**

The attendance figures were still in the process of being finalised but the College wouldn't meet the attendance target this year.

Governors asked how attendance compared to other colleges. The Principal said other colleges were seeing a decline in attendance. The College's attendance was comparatively good compared to others.

### **HR**

There had been a significant improvement in staff utilisation which was now at 95.5% compared to a target of 94%. This was up considerably from the position in January.

Staff turnover was up slightly with a year to date figure for all staff of 14%. This was broadly in line with the sector.

There had been a slight increase in the % of BME for staff and students. Staff were still representative of the student population.

Sickness absence was high at 7% compared to a target of 3% and benchmarking data of 3%. COVID accounted for 2% of the absence. There had been a significant increase in the amount of long term sickness.

Governors were pleased that the staff profile represented the student profile in terms of ethnicity but asked how well the management hierarchy reflected the student profile. The Principal said the data showed the College Management Team reflected the student population well. It was agreed to add this information to the Data Dashboard.

**Action:** MC

### ii) **Development Plan 2021-22**

The Corporation received for review the 'Development Plan 2021/22 July Update' (Paper 4). It was noted that there were four 'amber' assessments in the Development Plan. Nothing had significantly changed from the last update.

Governors asked whether they should be concerned about recruitment. The Principal said she wasn't unduly concerned at this stage. The College had a good idea of which external applications would convert into enrolment and was working to maximise as many enrolments as possible before the summer break.

*AL joined the meeting.*

Governors asked whether there had been any particular changes to the College's provision. The Principal said the adult offer had increased in volume and the College had over delivered on the Adult Education Budget. A number of opportunities were being explored for next year, including provision for refugees, more National Skills Fund provision and new Level 4 and 5 provision.

IT WAS DECIDED to note the Development Plan.

## 12/22 Strategic Matters

### i) Executive Report

The Executive Team Report was received in advance of the meeting (Paper 5), providing updates on:

- Strategic Matters
- Financial Matters
- Leadership and Management
- Achievement Rates 2021-22
- Partnerships
- Student News

The following key points were drawn to the attention of the Corporation:

There had been changes to the Ofsted Inspection process. The framework had been updated to include a greater aspect around skills and demonstrating how the College met local skills needs. As a result of the change, all institutions would be inspected between 2022 and 2025.

The ONS were carrying out a review to determine whether colleges in England would keep their private sector status or move to the public sector. The decision would be known by September. Although the implications weren't fully understood at this stage, there were no concerns.

Governors asked whether the VAT regime might change if colleges moved to the public sector. MC said it might be impacted by changes in the accounting treatment.

The College had been successful in recruitment recently and made some good appointments. There would be a full complement of College Management Team for the new academic year

Confirmation had been received that the College had been successful in their recent Skills Development Fund bid for green skills. This was a collaborative bid across West London. The College's focus would be on electric vehicles at the Skills and Logistics centre.

IT WAS DECIDED to note the Executive Report.

### ii) Strategic Plan

The updated Strategic Plan was received in advance of the meeting. Papers 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e and 6f.

The Principal explained that the Strategic Plan now included some draft Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Governors were asked to send in any feedback about the proposed to KPIs to the Head of Governance.

**Action:** All Governors

The draft Strategic Plan had been shared with the College Management Team, who had been given the opportunity to add in their feedback. The next step would be to share it with students and staff. An updated Strategic Plan would be brought to the next Corporation meeting for final approval.

*SM and AA left the meeting*

## 13/22 **College Budget 2022-23**

The College Budget 2022-23 and the 2023-24 Financial Forecast (Paper 7) that had been reviewed by the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee was received for the Corporation to approve.

The Chair of the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee said the committee had carried out a robust review of the proposed budget. On the recommendation of the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee IT WAS DECIDED to:

- a) Approve the operating revenue budget for 2022-23 with gross income of £21,766k and gross expenditure of £21,666k giving an operating surplus of £100k.
- b) Approve the financial plan for 2023-24 with operating surplus of £50k.
- c) Agree to a capital expenditure programme for 2022-23 of £800k in total.
- d) Give delegated authority to the Chair and Vice Chair to both approve any technical revisions if required by 31st July in view of any material late changes arising, including late funding notification changes from the funding bodies.

The Chair said the College continued to look at the budget, in particular the amount allowed for inflation and any updates would be reviewed by the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee.

## 14/22 **Financial Scheme of Delegation**

The 'Financial Regulations Update' (Paper 8) which had been reviewed by the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee was received in advance of the meeting.

### i) **Financial Scheme of Delegation**

The proposed Financial Scheme of Delegation had been received as part of the Financial Regulations update. The Finance, Resources and Capital Projects committee had reviewed this at their last meeting and were recommending approval of it with an amendment to increase the amount of spend the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee could approve to £300,000.

IT WAS DECIDED to approve the Financial Scheme of Delegation with the amendment to increase the amount of spend the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee could approve to £300,000.

### ii) **Renewal of Contracts**

IT WAS DECIDED to give delegated authority to the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee to approve the renewal of contracts that were due over the summer including insurance and the Brentford sports provision.

**Action: MC**

## 15/22 **Subcontracting Provision**

A 'Subcontracting Provision Report' (Paper 9) had been received in advance of the meeting, including the subcontracting policy. The subcontracting policy and provision had been reviewed by the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee who were making a recommendation to approve the subcontracting to the Gurdwara of the delivery of Adult Education Budget (AEB) funded provision up to a maximum aggregate value of £20,000.

IT WAS DECIDED to approve the subcontracting policy and subcontracting to the Gurdwara of the delivery of Adult Education Budget (AEB) funded provision up to a maximum aggregate value of £20,000.

#### 16/22 **Corporation Membership**

An update on Corporation Membership (Paper 10) was received in advance of the meeting. On the recommendation of the Governance and Search Committee, IT WAS DECIDED to:

- i) Approve an extension to the current term of office for Bruce Armstrong for 1 year running to 31 July 2023.
- ii) Appoint Charanjit Ajit Singh as an Associate Member for a term of 1 year from 1 August 2022.
- iii) Appoint John Bolt as an Associate Member for a second term of 1 year from 1 September 2022.
- iv) Appoint James Bryant for a second term of office from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026.

#### 17/22 **Board Committees**

An update on Board Committees (Paper 11), including the proposed committee structure for 2022-23, was received in advance of the meeting.

- i) **Committee Structure**  
On the recommendation of the Governance and Search Committee IT WAS DECIDED to merge the current Governance and Search Committee and the Strategy and Business Development Committee to form a new committee called the 'Governance, Search and Strategy Committee'. After making an amendment IT WAS DECIDED to approve the proposed terms of reference for the committee included as Appendix 2 of Paper 11.
- ii) **Committee Membership**  
IT WAS DECIDED to approve the committee membership as detailed in Appendix 1 of Paper 11.

#### 18/22 **Chair and Vice Chair Appointments 2022-23**

IT WAS DECIDED to appoint Mr Simon Wilcox to be the Chair for the period 1 August 2022 to 31 December 2022.

IT WAS DECIDED to appoint Mr Bruce Armstrong and Mr Alex Luke to be the joint Vice Chairs for the period 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023.

#### 19/22 **Chair Designate**

The Chair explained the process that had been used to recruit a new Chair for the Corporation. The Corporation had decided to recruit externally and had been supported in this by Peridot Partners. Following interviews held on Monday 4 July 2022, the Recruitment Panel were recommending the appointment of Stuart McGeoch as Chair Designate.

IT WAS DECIDED to appoint Stuart McGeoch as Chair Designate from 1 August 2022 to 31 December 2022.

## 20/22 **Governor Link Visit Reports**

A 'Governor Link Visits Report 2021-22' was received in advance of the meeting (Paper 12) and was NOTED.

Over the summer, KF and BA would be carrying out a review of the Governor Link process.

## 21/22 **Governance Self-Assessment 2021-22**

A 'Corporation Self-Assessment Stage 1 Report' (Paper 13) was received in advance of the meeting. Governors were thanked for their time spent on the process so far.

The SAR process started in the summer term, following the same framework as in previous years although governors had also been asked to complete a Board Evaluation questionnaire this year.

Overall, the feedback from the reviews had been very positive with all scores in the upper quartile. A few areas had been identified as being areas the Corporation could continue to strengthen. These would be fed into the action planning.

The remaining components of the self-assessment framework would be completed in the autumn term and the final report would be brought to the December meeting of the Corporation.

IT WAS DECIDED to note the report.

## 22/22 **Report from the Governance and Search Committee**

### i) **Governance and Search Committee Report**

The report from the committee (Paper 14) was received and NOTED.

At the Corporation meeting on 11 May 2022, the Governance and Search Committee had been given delegated authority to decide the length of service for the new governors. The Chair reported that the following lengths of service had been agreed in order to stagger leaving dates:

Abbas Alimohamed:	3 year term of office.
Annita Cornish:	4 year term of office.
Stuart McGeoch:	3 year term of office.
Alan Rides:	4 year term of office.

### ii) **Minutes from the Governance and Search Committee Meeting**

The minutes from the meeting of the committee held on 4 May 2022 (Paper 15) were received and NOTED.

## 23/22 **Report from the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee**

### i) **Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee Report**

The report from the committee (Paper 16) was received and NOTED.

Governors drew attention to the new requirements in the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance surrounding governor training for safeguarding. It was agreed MM/KF would look at what additional steps were needed.

**Action:** MM/KF

- ii) **Minutes from the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee**  
The minutes from the meeting of the committee held on 15 June 2022 (Paper 17) were received and NOTED.
- iii) **Update from the Community and Student Governor and Student Governors**  
Students had enjoyed recent events held at the College. A number of student requests had been implemented.

#### 24/22 **Report from the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee**

- i) **Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee Report**  
The report from the committee (Paper 18) was received and NOTED.
- ii) **Minutes from the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee**  
The minutes from the meeting of the committee held on 22 June 2022 (Paper 19) were received and NOTED.
- iii) **College Financial Dashboard**  
The 'ESFA College Governors Financial Dashboard – April 2022' (Paper 20) was received and NOTED.
- iv) **Management Accounts**  
The 'Management Accounts for April 2022' (Paper 21) were received and NOTED.

#### 25/22 **Report from the Audit Committee Meeting**

- i) **Audit Committee Report**  
The report from the committee (Paper 22) was received and NOTED.
- ii) **Minutes from the Audit Committee**  
The minutes from the meeting of the committee held on 29 June 2022 (Paper 23) were received and NOTED.
- iii) **Post 16 Audit Code of Practice**  
The Post 16 Audit Code of Practice 2021-2022 was received and NOTED.

#### 26/22 **Any Other Urgent Business**

There was no other business.

#### 27/22 **Farewells**

As it was the last meeting for Mr Z Haulkhory, thanks were passed onto him for all his support and contributions.

Governors also thanked Ms Ajit Singh for all of her hard work and contribution whilst she had served as a governor for the College. From 1 August 2022, Ms Ajit Singh would take on the role of an Associate Member.

#### 28/22 **Items for the Next Agenda**

- Approval of the Strategic Plan 2022 to 2025.



**29/22 Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Corporation was Wednesday 12 October 2022 at 6.00 pm.

### Summary of Actions

<b>No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
16 23/3/22	In the longer term the aim is to agree on a framework for future pay awards and to delegate to the Executive the authority to operate the framework as agreed. Any deviation to the agreed framework would then be reported to the Corporation for review and approval.	TA	July 23
11/22	Add in information about the College Management Team ethnicity profile to the Governor Portal.	MC	Oct 22
12/22	Send in any comments about the proposed KPIs for the Strategic Plan to the Head of Governance.	All Governors	Sept 22
14/22	Put in place a process to ensure that the necessary authorisation is received for contracts due over the summer.	MC	Sept 22
23/22	Looking into what additional steps are needed for governor safeguarding training to meet the requirements in the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.	MM/KF	Sept 22