



THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP CORPORATION

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE CORPORATION OF THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP

HELD VIA ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY, 10 MARCH 2021

		<u>Meetings Attendance</u>
PRESENT:	Kate Webb (Group Principal & Chief Executive)	(4 out of 4)
	Angela Wellings	(3 out of 4)
	Peter Tyndale	(4 out of 4)
	Anthony Haines	(4 out of 4)
	Arden Bhattacharya	(4 out of 4)
	Tina Coates	(4 out of 4)
	Martin Pritchett	(4 out of 4)
	Rob Lewis	(4 out of 4)
	Kiran Virdee	(3 out of 4)
	Nathan Garat	(3 out of 3)
	Tom Wainwright	(4 out of 4)
	Mobolaji Alabi	(4 out of 4)
	Daljit Bains	(3 out of 4)
	Natalie Viola	(2 out of 4)
	Taha Hussain	(4 out of 4)
	Jake Smith	(2 out of 4)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Graham Try	(Deputy CEO)
	Maxine Wood	(Principal, Langley College)
	Amanda Down	(Principal, Sixth Form)
	Bernadette Joslin	(Group Vice Principal, Student Services)
CLERK:	Lynn Payne	(4 out of 4)

PART I

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	The meeting started at 6pm.	
	The new Chair of the Board, Angela Wellings, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She introduced herself and paid tribute to Tony Dixon who had served the College well as the Chair and a Governor over a number of years, but had resigned last month due to ill health. The College would make a further tribute to him in the spring when there was more freedom of movement.	
	The Chair advised Members she wanted to spend more time on the items requiring approval at this meeting and would therefore take papers to note as read with questions from colleagues.	
1.	<u>Health & Safety Housekeeping</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received from Stuart Taylor, Shabnam Ali and Aimee Malynn	
	Members were advised that Shabnam had sent her apologies for the meeting and had now resigned as a Governor, as she had moved location with her employment.	

MINUTE NO.		ACTION
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> No Member declared any conflict of interest with the agenda.	
4.	<u>Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on:</u> a) <u>9 December 2020</u> The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 December 2020, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature was applied. All Members were agreed. b) <u>18 February 2021 – Written Resolution</u> The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 December 2020, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature was applied. All Members were agreed.	
5.	<u>Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on:</u> a) <u>7 October 2020</u> It was noted that all matters arising had been actioned, or would be covered on this agenda. b) <u>18 February 2021 – Written Resolution</u> It was noted that all matters arising had been actioned, or would be covered on this agenda.	
6.	<u>College Headlines</u> Thai item was presented by the Group Principal. Member were informed of the College headline performance against high level targets. Members noted the information on outcomes for students, comparing current performance with performance in the last academic year and Members noted student recruitment comparing performance with the last academic year and the year before. The report was noted.	
7.	<u>Strategic Plan</u> a. <u>2020/21 Annual Strategic Action Plan</u> This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members were advised of the 2020/21 annual strategic action plan and were invited to comment of challenge the information. In summary, the Group Principal said the FE sector continued to be financially stressed and TWFCG financial position was currently forecast to be marginally "Good" with healthy cash reserves. She said key risks and priorities continued to focus on student recruitment, promoting growth and reducing the operational deficit. She reminded Members that the current College Ofsted grade was "Good", as at December 2019. Members were informed that the national policy context, including updates on FE reform, had concluded that partnership was a key feature of the next phase of strategy. The Group Principal highlighted the opportunities the College might be involved in. The College's strategy would need to be mindful of the FE White Paper, skills for jobs and FE reform and advised members that the recent meeting of the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee had reviewed the key headlines from the White Paper. Members discussed the FE White Paper and were advised that it was delayed at this time because funding reviews did not match and there was more work to be done on it in the next 9 months. The report was noted. b. <u>Risk Management Action Plan 2020/21</u> This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members noted the risk management action plan 2020/21 update, and the Group Principal went through the summary of high risks. Members focused on the risk relating to severe disruption and adverse impacts on learner sand College operations from the Coronavirus pandemic. There was a lengthy and comprehensive discussion about the onsite Covid testing that had just started at the College. Members paid tribute to the College senior team, who had done extremely well in setting up the arrangements for student testing as this had been a huge logistical challenge.	

The Group Principal confirmed it had been a real collaborative effort with her senior colleagues as there had been much manoeuvring and considerable challenges.

Members noted the action plan update and detailed report.

c. Enrolment Report

Members were asked to note the analysis of enrolment figures to date for 2020/21. The Group Principal advised Members that the report was the current forecast of enrolment performance for adults and apprentices, and enrolment continued throughout the year. Members were advised that, at the time of reporting, 16-18 learner headcount across the College group was 2,597. Apprenticeship enrolments were 305, adult enrolment was 1,954 and HE headcount was 94. The Group Principal advised members that, as anticipated, the Covid-19 pandemic had meant that enrolment trends were not following historical patterns and numbers for adults and apprentices were lower. She said even more unpredictability and volatility had been experienced due to the U-turn on exam results in the summer. Members discussed the report and in particular the reduction in enrolment numbers in the various areas. It was noted it had been a good year for some Colleges, where they had been able to offer flexible provision, in particular with adult learning, but reduced enrolments would have a significant impact on finding allocations and grant.

The report on enrolment had been to the various committees of the Board and had been well rehearsed.

The report was noted.

8. Spring Term Safeguarding Update

This item was presented by the Group Vice Principal, Student Services (GVPSS). She provided a comprehensive report of Safeguarding work and cases arising over the year, to date. Of particular concern was the fact that Safeguarding cases had doubled and that most of them were related to mental health issues. The GVPSS explained what the Safeguarding team were focusing on and how in particular, they were helping vulnerable children.

The report was noted.

9. Reports from the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee Meeting of 10 February 2021 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 10 February 2021. The Chair updated Members on the work of the Committee this term.

i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

The only recommendation to the Board related to the appointment of a new Governor, however since the recommendation was made, the candidate had confirmed she had taken a new job and was unable to continue with her application.

10. Reports from the Audit Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting of 10 February 2021 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 10 February 2021. As the Chair of the Committee was not present, Graham Try (Deputy CEO) updated Members on the work of the committee this term.

ii. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

It was noted that there were no recommendations from the Committee.

11. Reports from the Resources Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting of 3 March 2021 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the minutes of the meeting of 3 March 2021 would be available at the next meeting for noting. The Chair of the Committee outlined the work of the Committee over the course of this term.

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

It was noted that there were no recommendations from the Committee.

b. Period 6 Management Accounts 2020/21

This item was presented by the Deputy CEO. Members had already received the Management Accounts. In summary, the Deputy CEO confirmed the current position was an improving one. The College were just into the "Good" financial health category. He confirmed the College was forecasting to have good cash at the end of the year and was in a good financial position.

Members noted the Period 6 Management Accounts.

c. Health & Safety Spring Term Report 2020/21

The Deputy CEO advised Members on health & safety performance this term. There had already been a discussion on the Covid-19 lateral flow testing at the College. Members noted the accidents and incidents at the College.

The report was noted.

12.

Governance

a. Corporation Business

Members noted the Clerk's report, in particular the dates for the next Governor Development Day and the Legal Update Training from Eversheds. Members were asked to agree to retain the low Board quorum of 5 at this time, for Board meetings, whilst there were still virtual meetings ongoing. It was noted attendance on the virtual platform had been extremely good.

Members unanimously agreed to retain the quorum of 5 for Board meetings at least until the end of the calendar year.

Members noted the membership of the Board and committee membership. As two Governors had retired today and two more Governors had recently left the Board, the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee would meet to consider whether to re-determine the number of Members on the Board and to look at new Governor applications. The Clerk informed Members that the Committee Membership would now change and this would be issued next month.

There was a discussion on the vacancy for a Vice Chair of the Board as Angela Wellings had at short notice taken over the Chair of the Board. Members were asked to consider an election for a new Vice Chair of the Board at this stage, effective from the May 2021 Board meeting until July 2022.

All Members were agreed.

The Chair of the Board advised Members she would like to look at the possibility of having two Vice Chairs of the Board and understanding this was possible would ask the next meeting of the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee to consider this and make a recommendation to the Board in May 2021. If the two Vice Chairs were agreed, the second Vice Chair would be appointed in time for the July Board meeting. Members agreed this was a useful discussion to have and looked forward to the next Board meeting. The Chair indicated that she would like two Vice Chairs covering different skills areas, but at the moment, in particular, she would like a Vice Chair with financial experience.

The report was noted.

b. Approval of Application of Seal

There was no use of the Seal to report.

The report was noted.

13.

Review of Decisions Taken at the Meeting and Proposals for Communication.

This item was presented by the Group Principal, who informed members that the decisions and discussions of the meeting, would be communicated in the normal way.

14.

Evaluation of Meeting

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	Members were pleased to complete an evaluation of the meeting, highlighting where they felt they had added value and made appropriate challenge.
15.	<u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings and Events</u> The dates and times of future meetings were noted. Scheduled for 6.00 pm on: Wednesday, 19 May 2021 Wednesday, 7 July 2021 Governance Development Day: 9.30am-12.30pm on: Friday, 7 May 2020
16.	<u>Any Urgent Business</u> The Chair of the Board paid tribute to three people at this meeting. First of all to Martin Pritchett and Arden Bhattacharya as this was their last meeting. Martin had been at the College for a number of years and had for a period of time been Chair of the Board, at a time when there were pivotal changes in Windsor. Arden had been a Governor since 2013 and a vast contributor to the Board and a key Governor on equality & diversity. Colleagues thanked Martin and Arden on their work on the Board. Secondly the Chair thanked Kate Webb, Group Principal & CEO, (as this was her last Board meeting), for all her work at the College over many years and hoped that there would be an opportunity for Governors to celebrate with her together with Tony Dixon, the former Chair of the Board, in person, when the lockdown was relaxed. The meeting ended at 7pm.

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING BY MEMBERS

Key evaluation points from the meeting where Governors felt they provided appropriate challenge & added value:

- Length of the meeting was about right
- Length of agenda items: The time spent on each agenda item was appropriate to inform the Board's decisions and recommendations.
- The structure of the papers was easy to follow.
- The papers were clear and the information to support the decision making was fully complete.

EXTRA VALUE

Governors spent much time considering the arrangements for student and their wellbeing at the College at this time.

There was a useful discussion on the planned Covid 19 testing at the College and comprehensive arrangements that had been made to make this easy for students.

The Safeguarding report was considered in detail. In particular, in relation to students who were suffering during the pandemic.

There was a discussion on reducing enrolments and thoughts towards the strategy day and how College income could be boosted again.

The College finances were considered and members were delighted with the move to “Good” financial health.

At this stage of the meeting it was agreed by all members present that matters of a private and confidential nature were to be discussed and had there been any members of the public present they would have been asked to leave the meeting.

Chair

Date