



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, 9 MARCH 2022

		<u>Meetings Attendance</u>
PRESENT:	Angela Wellings (Chair)	(3 out of 3)
	Gillian May (Group Principal & Chief Executive)	(3 out of 3)
	Peter Tyndale	(3 out of 3)
	Anthony Haines	(3 out of 3)
	Stuart Taylor	(3 out of 3)
	Tina Coates	(3 out of 3)
	Nathan Garat	(3 out of 3)
	Sam Foley	(3 out of 3)
	Rob Lewis	(2 out of 3)
	Tom Wainwright	(1 out of 3)
	Natalie Viola	(3 out of 3)
	Alison Wheatley	(3 out of 3)
	Iqra Abbas	(3 out of 3)
	George Shewell	(3 out of 3)
	Jake Smith	(1 out of 3)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Graham Try (Deputy CEO)	
	Amanda Down (Principal, Sixth Form)	
	Fiona Carthy (Carthy Communications)	
	Pete Ryder (Rockborn)	
	Karen Griffiths (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality Sixth Form)	
CLERK:	Lynn Payne	(3 out of 3)

PART I

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	The meeting started at 5.15pm	
1.	<u>Health & Safety Housekeeping</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received from Paul Britton, Mobolaji Alabi and Kiran Virdee.	
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> Sam Foley declared an interest in relation to matters related to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). She advised Members that for Part I and Part II meetings of the Board, ongoing, she would like to register this interest. No other Member declared any conflict of interest.	

4. Annual Safeguarding Spring Term Update
Members received a report from the Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality Sixth Form on recent actions taken by the Group in relation to safeguarding.
- The policies, procedures and documents were detailed and it was confirmed that they were robust and effective. The Vice Principal informed members that the safeguarding team were being hyper-vigilant in the area of safeguarding, at the moment, and that staff were receiving anxiety training relating to the nature of the cases they were dealing with. Members were also informed that with the increased disclosures from students, reflective sessions were being put in place to support staff. Members received information on the new easy to operate, online reporting process, in place for students at this time. It was likely this was one of the main reasons the number of cases had recently increased.
- There had been a recent Internal Audit from Mazars on safeguarding and this had resulted in a 'substantial assurance' on the risks in the arena of safeguarding. Two minor recommendations had been raised and had been actioned.
- Members were informed that each College site now had full Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) cover and all dedicated safeguarding staff were relevantly trained and qualified. An extensive, contextualised CPD offer was planned and would be delivered to all staff throughout the academic year.
- Members noted the statistics information in relation to safeguarding issues within the College Group and where the spike in numbers was evident, explanations provided. Rob Lewis asked whether there was anything happening on the student support programme for other students, an initiative that had been talked about years ago. The Vice Principal spoke about the need to be sensitive to those students willing to give advice and reasons why they might not be best placed to offer it.
- There was a discussion about the company called 22 for teams and supervisors to unburden in a safe space.
- Members noted the comprehensive report.**
5. Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 8 December 2021
The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 December 2021, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature was applied.
- All Members were agreed.**
6. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 8 December 2021
It was noted that there were no matters arising.
7. Group Principal's Update Report
This item was presented by the Group Principal, providing an update on the strategic and operational activities of the College Group. Members were informed that there were improved mid-year retention rates for the 16-19 ESFA funded programmes at all Colleges within the Group. The total applications for ESFA funded 16-19 study programmes had increased by 19% for the Group, compared to last year. Applications had increased by 8% for the Group, compared with last year. The Group Principal Informed Members that interest in Windsor College continued to grow in line with the College's strategy to position Windsor College as the Sixth Form College for Windsor and Maidenhead. In relation to Apprenticeships, it was noted there were 280 apprentices on the roll at present, with 110 starts in 2021/22, of which 30 started in January. The Group Principal advised members that the College was planning for an additional April cohort of apprentice starters to accommodate the increase in demand from employers.
- The report was noted.**
8. Risk Register 2021/22
Members noted the Risk Register and the changes and updates in risks from the last report. The key additions to the register related to safeguarding. Members were again advised that an Internal Audit of safeguarding had been undertaken and completed in January 2022 and the outcome from the auditors was a 'Substantial' Assurance.

Members were advised that the updated and revised Prevent register had now been completed. The processes established for reporting and tracking sexual harassment and peer-on-peer abuse were now in place, and training and guidance had been provided to ensure staff and students were up to date and aware of the new processes.

In relation to student recruitment, there was now a new curriculum strategy for Langley, identifying opportunities for the return of Entry Level and Level 1 provision to Langley. Members were reminded that the HE and apprenticeship growth strategy had been presented to the Board at its last meeting.

In-year retention at R04, showed an improvement across the College Group in student outcomes and a full curriculum plan, review and update, had taken place.

In terms of IT security, it was noted that a review of the new specification of Cyber Essentials and the changes the organisation would need to be implemented. The Chair of the Audit Committee felt the risks had been conveyed correctly.

Members noted the risk register.

9. Brand Perception

This item was presented by Fiona Carthy of Carthy Communications. Members were updated on the recent brand perception survey, conducted for the College Group. The survey had been undertaken in November and December 2021 and used the methodology of one-to-one interviews with key members of staff, and online surveys with students, parents and staff. The survey response rates were noted as 14% students, 10% parents and 36% staff.

Fiona Carthy advised members that overall, the findings of the brand perception research had been favourable in terms of brand awareness and overall representation. It was noted there was a strong brand recognition amongst target audiences and the College Group was performing well in most aspects of delivery.

The most serious area of concern was in relation to the satisfaction of both staff and students at Langley College, who were least likely to recommend the College to others. The survey, whilst rated highly by parents, had identified some issues relating to satisfaction amongst students and staff at Strode's College. Fiona Carthy said there was much detail behind the research and many assumptions had been tested.

Langley College needed a strong focus and Windsor College was viewed very favourably. Rob Lewis asked whether brand or reputation were the issues, and whether students were not being provided with what they expected, particularly at Langley College. Fiona Carthy referred to the key decision makers for students when choosing a College, and the major competitors to the College in the area. It was noted the research did not include information from feeder schools as it was too difficult to get the level of engagement.

Members asked how the Group Colleges were perceived in different locations but were advised that this would require a different piece of work to identify.

Sam Foley asked how much the Local Authority could assist the College, as there were high levels of positivity within that audience, and it would be useful to see what input they had. The Group Principal advised Members a report would come to the next Strategy, Governance and Search Committee meeting, to consider what actions to take.

The report was noted.

10. Reports from the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee Meeting of 9 February 2022 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 9 February 2022. The Chair of the Committee updated Members on the work of the Committee this term.

i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

It was noted that the Governor Appointment, Reappointment & Induction procedure had previously been approved.

SG&S Agenda

11. Reports from the Audit Committee
- a. Draft Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting of 16 February 2022 and oral Report from the Chair
Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 16 February 2022. The Chair of the Committee updated Members on the work of the Committee this term.
- i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations
It was noted that there were no recommendations to the Board from this meeting.
12. Reports from the Resources Committee
- a. Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting of 2 March 2022 and oral Report from the Chair
Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 2 March 2022. The Chair of the Committee updated Members on the work of the Committee this term.
- i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations
It was noted that all recommendations would be considered as separate agenda items.
- b. Period 6 Management Accounts to 31 January 2022
This item was presented by the Deputy CEO. Members were advised that the College's forecast year-end income and expenditure position now reported in Period 6 management accounts was for a deficit of £0.803 million, which was £172,000 lower than the £0.975 million approved deficit budget for the year. It was noted that the forecast excluded estimated costs of £0.323 million relating to the planned merger with BCA, accordingly the forecast including those merger costs was a deficit of £1.126 million.
- Members noted the detailed reasons for the year-end variations against budgets in the income and expenditure account. The most significant financial risk to the current and future years budgets continued to be learner recruitment and its impact on funding body grant income and tuition fees, as these represented 94% of the College's income. Members were advised that there was no real change in the Period 6 Management Accounts from the Period 5 Management Accounts.
- The report was noted.**
- c. Health & Safety Spring Term Report
Members noted the health & safety performance report for the spring term. It was noted the report had also been to the recent Resources Committee.
- The report was noted.**
13. Governance
- a. Corporation Business
Members noted the report. The dates for the next governor training and induction sessions were noted.
- The Committee and Board meetings to December 2023 were agreed.**
The report was noted.
- b. Approval of Application of Seal
It was noted that the Corporation Seal had not been applied since the last meeting.
- The report was noted.**
- c. Instrument & Articles Update
Members were asked to discuss and agree the proposed change to the College's Instrument and Articles of Government at Clause 12(1).
- The clause related to the appointment process of Senior Post Holders. The process had been updated and was now more flexible enabling Senior Post Holders appointments to be made in line with current employment legislation. Members discussed and agreed the change.
- All Members were agreed.**

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| 14. | <u>Review of Decisions taken at the meeting and proposals for communication.</u>
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. Members had participated well in the items on the agenda, adding value and making appropriate challenge. Papers were considered sufficient to inform decisions. |
| 15. | <u>Evaluation of Meeting</u>
Members agreed the papers were sufficient to inform their decisions, that reports were well written and papers had been received in good time to consider before the meeting. The report on safeguarding was well received and considered. There was a good interactive discussion on brand perception.
Members considered they had added value and made appropriate challenge. |
| 16. | <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, 18 May 2022
Wednesday, 6 July 2022

Governance Development Day on: Friday, 6 May 2022 |
| 17. | <u>Any Urgent Business</u>
The Group Principal informed members she was going to set up a 5-minute slot at each Board meeting, going forward, for staff and student members to make a short presentation to the Board. This would start with the meeting in May. |
| The meeting ended at 6pm. | |

**Group
Principal**

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: 18 May 2022