

**THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP CORPORATION**

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE QUALITY & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

###### HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE 2022 VIA ZOOM

Meetings Attendance

PRESENT: Tina Coates (Chair) (4 out of 4)

Gillian May (Group Principal & Chief Executive) (4 out of 4)

Angela Wellings (3 out of 4)

Rob Lewis (4 out of 4)

Peter Tyndale (4 out of 4)

Natalie Viola (4 out of 4)

Jake Smith (2 out of 4)

Alison Wheatley (3 out of 4)

IN ATTENDANCE: Amanda Down (Principal, Sixth Form)

Karen Griffiths (Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality, Sixth Form)

Gina Moore (Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality)

Juliet Holloway (Group Vice Principal, Business Development)

Anne Entwistle (Principal, BCA)

CLERK: Lynn Payne (4 out of 4)

# PART I

**The meeting started at 6pm.**

| **MINUTE No** |  | **ACTION** |
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|  | Apologies for Absence  Apologies had been received from Tom Wainwright. |  |
|  | Declarations of Interest  No member declared a conflict of interest with the agenda. |  |
|  | Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 March 2022  The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 March 2022, having been previously sent to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair’s electronic signature would be applied.  **All Members were agreed.** |  |
|  | Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Held on 16 March 2022  It was noted that all matters arising had been actioned or would be covered within this agenda. |  |
|  | Curriculum Risk Register 2021/22  This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members had received the curriculum risk register 2021/22 detailing the key strategic risks. Members were reminded of the priorities, namely:   1. Growth - with a particular focus on 16-19 study programmes. 2. Finance - to maintain “Good” financial health. 3. Quality - to raise academic standards and approve student outcomes to agreed targets. 4. Inclusion - to enhance social mobility through improved access to college provision. 5. Alliances - to develop alliances and secure the strategic future of the group. 6. Maintain investment in the Colleges resources to provide inspirational teaching and learning.   In relation to the risks, the Group Principal advised members there was no change in the underlying risks. With regard to recruitment and retention of key staff, members were advised of the higher staffing costs impacting the curriculum viability but that larger group sizes had a negative impact on the student experience and outcomes. With regard to ALS funding, student recruitment and retention, members noted the reduced student numbers in the current academic year and the subsequent improvement in applications for the next. In considering non-financially viable curriculum areas, members were informed that the numbers for Strode’s were lower than anticipated in some courses, and that group sizes of less than 16 students indicated potential viability issues. Members also discussed the risk relating to timetabling at Langley College, as it did not yet provide sufficient enrichment opportunities. The Group Principal advised members this risk was monitored but remained a challenge. Members noted the other risks relating to financial, industry placement, IT related, quality and funding and non-franchised HE provision, and the risks were noted.  **The report was noted.** |  |
|  | Monitoring 2021/22 Performance Targets   1. TWFCG Quality Improvement Plan   This item was presented by the Principal, Sixth Form. Members were advised of the actions taken and progress made, with the key priorities for improvement and development identified in TWFCG Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Members were informed that across the College Group there was an improved in-year retention, particularly at Langley, which it was hoped would secure an improved end of year achievement. There was also improved vocational achievement in identifying subject areas at Langley College. It was noted robust quality assurance processes were in place to identify and respond to areas of concern and there was an improved consistency of assessment, supported by appropriate staff training activity. Applications had increased and accepted offer numbers for 16-18 study programmes had increased, with an overall increase of 22.8% in applications and an increase of 18.7% in applicant accepted offers, as at May 2022.  Members were informed that Prevent training and updates were delivered to all staff. There was also good progress in ensuring all students completed training on Prevent and online safety.  It was noted the College Group now included ESOL provision for refugees and asylum seekers. There was also good progress in securing meaningful industry placements for most learners in 2021/22.  The Principal, advised members that staff recruitment remained a key priority to ensure quality was maintained. She referred to the issues across the sector relating to it being very hard to recruit to positions and that this remained a key risk for the College. It was reported that progress had been slow in some curriculum areas, particularly English & maths at Langley, despite interventions. The Principal, informed members that staffing difficulties continued to hinder progress and further interventions were in place, but that this provision remained a key area of concern. Finally, members were informed that the summer exams series was underway, but that outcomes remained unpredictable given the lack of clarity on grade boundaries. Members noted the whole College KPI targets for 2021/22. The target for attendance was to be at or above 90%, retention to be at or above 95% and pass rate on all courses to be at or above 95%.  **The report was noted.**   1. Higher Education Strategic Plan   This item was presented by the Principal, Sixth Form. Members had received the new strategy and associated action plan for HE which updated members on the current position, actions taken, and progress made against key priorities of growth and development. The Principal, reminded members that the HE strategy provided a summary of the current position with regard to student numbers and course offering. It set out the agreed objectives for the next three years with a clear focus on sustainable growth, meeting the needs of local and national priorities and offering appropriate and desired progression routes for students and it supports widening participation within the local community. The Principal, advised members that there was a need to better recognise the provision of HE in the College. The vision of the three-year strategic plan 2021-24 focused on the key priorities in HE of growth, quality, inclusion, employer partnership and financial resilience. She informed members that at the moment, the college offered a range of courses, and it was hoped to add Sport and Creative courses. There was also some ongoing investigation into Digital Technologies for a course starting September 2023, as it was considered to be an area of growth. The target market was adults looking for opportunities to re-engage and compared with universities it was agreed the FE/HE offer was relatively cheap.  Members noted the objectives and aims of the strategy, together with the proposed timetable. The Chair thanked the Principal, for her comprehensive report.  **The report was noted.**   1. Adult Education & Apprenticeships Performance Update   This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members received an update on adult and apprenticeship provision. Members were reminded that the adult and apprenticeship provision were both impacted on significantly by the Covid-19 pandemic, affecting both enrolments and delivery. The report highlighted the key areas that were in growth and recovery this year, together with details on retention and expected achievement.  **The report was noted.** |  |

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|  | Annual Lesson Observation Report  This item was presented by the Principal, Sixth Form. Members had received a summary of the outcomes from the lesson observations carried out in 2021/22 and the report showed the link between the lesson observation process to performance management and the related improvement of teaching, learning and assessment within the College. Members were advised that the revised Lesson Observation Policy had been introduced with formal observations called ‘drop in observations’ and conducted for 30 minutes. 90.9% of required observations had been completed to date, with 98.9% of lessons observed to date meeting College expectations. Areas for further development and support within teaching & learning had been identified and would feed into the TLA training. The Principal focused on the areas identified for improvement and confirmed that both staff and students had been adjusting to the way of working from online to face-to-face.  The Chair of the Board felt this was a comprehensive report but asked if students themselves would report they were seeing an increase in the quality of teaching, the student voice impact on the learner’s experience needed to be evidenced. The Principal advised members that the student perception report would be available at the end of the year and would be based on teaching and learning. This report would be shared with the committee. The Chair thanked the Principal for her report.  **The report was noted.** | **Principal, Sixth Form** |
|  | Safeguarding Termly Update  This item was presented by the Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality, Sixth Form. Members were advised of the actions taken by the Group in relation to safeguarding. It was noted the College Group safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures were robust and effective, and adequate training was being provided for staff at all levels including a Prevent update. With regard to the arrangements for safeguarding, it was noted that each site now had full Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) cover and all dedicated safeguarding staff were relevantly trained and qualified. Members discussed the issue of the spike in number of CiC leavers and were informed that the number of children in care had grown most significantly and was likely due to the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children enrolling with the College. This could be further explained by the turbulent situation in particular countries currently notable, Afghanistan.  The Vice Principal advised members there was a high demand for ESOL provision and the college was continually being asked by social workers and those working for the local authority looking to place newly arrived UASC students on ESOL courses as places became available. The Vice Principal informed members there was increasing evidence that safeguarding any element reduced the vulnerability to radicalisation. There was a need to consider whether the experience of the student rendered them more susceptible to radicalisation? There was an increase in reports of self-harm and suicide at this time. Members discussed the issues raised in the report in detail. The Student Governor present at the meeting gave an insight into student discussions and felt there needed to be more on-site support for students who need it, as they were less likely to ask for help.  Members discussed the counselling that was available, but it was noted that the local council were stretched on mental health support and, even if the counselling was working, the real concern was that there was nothing available to support students beyond that. The Chair of the Committee asked for some of these papers to go to the Board for a wider discussion at some stage.  **The report was noted.** | **Group Principal** |
|  | Evaluation of Meeting  Members contributed significantly to the items on this agenda, in particular the Risk Register, the Curriculum Risk Register, the Quality Improvement Plan, the Higher Education Strategic Plan and Safeguarding termly update. Appropriate challenge was made in useful discussions and members ‘added value’ in the interactive discussion and suggestions. |  |
|  | Dates and Times of Future Meetings  Dates and times of future meetings were noted as: |  |
|  | Any Urgent Business  The Group Principal asked for the meeting in September 2022 to be moved to October 2022. It was agreed there should be an update on enrolments in October.  **All Members were agreed.**  The Principal, Sixth Form said this would be useful as there would be a huge number of appeals after the exam process this year and a report in December would be beneficial. It was agreed to change the dates in the SAR to reflect Q&C being held in December. | **Refer to Corporation** |

**The meeting ended at 7.15pm**

Chair ................................……...................... Date ..................................................