



# THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP BOARD OF GOVERNORS

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

Held at Langley College on Wednesday, 13 December 2023

		<u>Meetings Attendance</u>
PRESIDENT:	Angela Wellings (Chair)	(2 out of 2)
	Paul Britton ( <a href="#">online</a> )	(2 out of 2)
	Jacob Clay ( <b>new Staff Governor</b> )	(1 out of 1)
	Tina Coates ( <a href="#">online</a> )	(2 out of 2)
	Jo Croft	(2 out of 2)
	Sam Foley	(1 out of 2)
	Nathan Garat	(2 out of 2)
	Anthony Haines	(2 out of 2)
	Rob Lewis	(2 out of 2)
	Gillian May (Group Principal & CEO)	(2 out of 2)
	Ksenija Pavlovska	(2 out of 2)
	Signe Sutherland	(2 out of 2)
	Ian Thomson ( <a href="#">online</a> )	(2 out of 2)
	Peter Tyndale	(2 out of 2)
	Alison Wheatley	(2 out of 2)
APOLOGIES:	Pippa Goodwin	(0 out of 2)
	Aaina Khan	(1 out of 2)
	Kiran Virdee	(0 out of 2)
	Janet Robertson	(1 out of 2)

IN ATTENDANCE:	Richard Munday	Deputy CEO
	Amanda Down	Principal, Sixth Form
	Anne Entwistle	Principal, FE
	Tracy Reeve	Director of Governance
	Karen Griffiths ( <a href="#">online</a> )	VP Quality Sixth Form
	Michele Clarke	Head of Employer Engagement – Commercial } <b>part</b>
	Juliet Holloway	Group Strategic Projects Director }

## PART I

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	<b>The meeting started at 5.00pm</b>	
Pre -0	<b><u>Presentations:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><u>Green Skills Curriculum Developments</u></b></li> </ul> <p>Michel Clarke (MC) presented an update on the development of the Green Skills Curriculum at TWFCG. The College was now working with three awarding bodies to deliver seven courses in renewable technologies, four courses in electrical installation, and two courses in plumbing and heating. MC also highlighted the Skills Bootcamps that were developed with funding from the Strategic Development Fund and now the Local Skills Improvement Fund. These courses were employer led on curriculum design and provided bespoke 60-hour training programmes. Examples of Skills Bootcamps developed to date were: Fuel Poverty Awareness and Retrofit, Green Technologies and Retrofit, and Electrical Installation. The</p>	

meeting also noted the marketing material for the courses to upskill in plumbing, heating, electrical, retrofit and renewable technologies. The use of the Elizabeth Line map to highlight the accessibility of Langley College from London was commended. MC confirmed that 13 short courses had been developed over a period of 11 months and the College had developed a network of freelance specialist technical tutors to deliver this provision. Turnover from September 2023 to January 2024 had been £96,000 and 247 adult learners had taken commercial short-courses. The meeting commended the significant progress that had been made to date in this new and exciting curriculum area.

Key priorities for 2024 were noted as:

- Running more courses and increasing revenue
- Working to 'grow' internal college Trainers to deliver the provision
- Expand the mixed economy model further – especially in relation to funding streams.

The Group Principal / CEO (GM) suggested that this curriculum development would be a useful case study to highlight to Ofsted during any inspection and Skills discussion.

***The meeting NOTED the update and COMMENDED the progress with this new employer focussed curriculum area.***

• **Safeguarding Reporting 2023/24**

The two designated safeguarding leads for TWFCG - Principal FE (AE) and VP Sixth-Form (KG) - presented a proposal for Safeguarding Reporting to governors at TWFCG during 2023/24. This proposal was being recommended by Quality & Curriculum Committee (30 November 2023). The meeting also discussed the robust filtering, monitoring and tracking systems that were in place and allowed any themes and trends to be identified as well as flagging individual concerns. The meeting was given a demonstration of the 'NetSupport DNA' filtering system that the college was now using to protect learners and track any safeguarding issues. Governors noted that NetSupport DNA enabled the college to track, monitor and manage how efficiently the college systems were being used while providing a protected online environment to maximise safeguarding provision. The DNA system allowed the College to put in layers of filtering that mean that unsafe content was no accessible for learners. KG confirmed that any sites that were blocked were monitored carefully and regularly. In addition to filtering the College monitored the use of all IT devices that were logged into the College network. This monitoring system generated alerts which went to the safeguarding team for action. Urgent alerts were acted upon immediately. The meeting discussed the filtering systems and KG confirmed that a lot of 'alerts' were generated on a daily basis - especially at lunchtime. The additional use of software called RIPPLE flagged any searches where suicidal phrases were used. Governors discussed the 'word map' of subjects that had generated alerts at each of the different college during the previous week and were shown how any alerts were followed up and acted upon. KG confirmed that trending searches often reflected current news stories and the Chair expressed surprise that the Israel and Hamas conflict had not featured. AE confirmed that staff had been briefed on how to discuss this subject during tutorials; there had been DfE guidance on the approach to take.

Governors were also assured of the robust safeguarding policies in place at TWFCG which all referred – where appropriate- to online safety. KG highlighted the college Safeguarding Steering Group which met fortnightly to monitor all online safeguarding systems including DNA, CPOMS and user access and permissions.

***Governors suggested that management should consider whether students could be asked to get involved in the Safeguarding Steering Group if and when confidentiality was not an issue.*** The Chair of Governors (AW) sought the student governor view on this and KP agreed that to involve students on a termly basis would be useful.

**AE/ KG**

***The update on the comprehensive filtering and monitoring processes put in place at TWFCG for 2023/24 was NOTED.***

***The meeting APPROVED the proposal for Safeguarding reporting 2023/24 at TWFCG as presented:***

- ***The annual safeguarding report to be presented to the Board at the second full meeting of the academic year. This will cover:***
  - *Overview and current challenges in safeguarding*
  - *Presentation of relevant data on safeguarding incidents and trends for past and current year*
  - *Analysis of data to identify key areas of concern or improvement*
  - *Digital safeguarding*
  - *Training and professional development for staff and students*
  - *In year and future planning and initiatives*
- ***Further safeguarding reports – with a focus on emerging themes - to be presented at all Quality & Curriculum Committee meetings.***
- ***Case studies to be shared to demonstrate process and impact.***
- ***Changes to safeguarding policies will be highlighted and shared. Significant changes will be accompanied by additional presentations or training where required or requested.***

***ACTION: Trend analysis and benchmarking data against other colleges/ sector average to be included wherever possible.***

**(All members were agreed.)**

1. **Health & Safety Housekeeping**

The Chair (AW) welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through the H&S matters. AW welcomed Jacob Clay to his first Board meeting since he had been appointed as Staff Governor for the Sixth Form.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received as detailed above.

3. **AOB**

There was no urgent other business notified.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

5. **Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 4 October 2023**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 October 2023, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and would be taken as signed by the Chair.

**All Members were agreed.**

6. **Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 4 October 2023**

The Director of Governance presented a report which updated the meeting on the current status of 'matters arising'. All matters were included on the agenda apart from the Finance Regulations which were not due for review until March 2024.

***The update was NOTED***

It was noted that there were no other matters arising.

7.

**Staff Governors' Report**

The Chair asked new Staff Governor (JC) to introduce himself. The meeting noted that JC was a psychology lecturer at Windsor College and was the curriculum lead for Humanities at the College.

AW updated the meeting on the current work to develop new Higher Education provision and the current work to identify suitable employers and HEIs to work with. AW also flagged the positive response from staff in relation to the 6.5% Cost Of Living pay award for All Staff from 1 December 2023; it had been very well received and staff were looking forward to their December pay. The Chair was pleased to hear that it had been well received as she asserted that it had been a big decision for the Corporation to award the 6.5%.

The meeting discussed the recent Staff Survey and agreed that there was nothing contentious within the results. The CEO (GM) confirmed that a consistent theme amongst responses was in relation to the need for better communication ahead of any system changes e.g. the introduction of the new ILP system which had been problematic for some staff.

The Chair (AW) thanked the staff governors for their input and asserted the value of Staff Voice for the Corporation.

***The Staff Governor Feedback was NOTED***

8.

**Student Feedback**

Sixth Form Student Governor (KP) presented an update for the meeting. KP confirmed that the first term had gone well, any initial timetable clashes were resolved quickly. The new Individualised Learning Plan (ILP) system was working well.

***The Student Governor Feedback was NOTED***

*[Anthony Haines stepped out of the meeting.]*

9.

**GOVERNANCE**

9.1

**Board Membership**

The Director of Governance (TR) presented a paper which detailed the Members of the Corporation with cessation dates, sub-committee membership and the details of the current Chairs of the sub-committees. Governors were reminded that the current Board membership of TWFCG was determined at 18 members, but TWFCG was currently in a transition period post-merger where the Instrument and Articles allowed a slightly higher number of members. This was initially 21 members, but TR confirmed that the membership of the Board had reduced during 2022/23 as members had left the Board at the end of their terms of office. The membership would be back to the pre-merger determined number of 18 members by the end of 2023.

The meeting noted the Governors' terms of office that would end during 2023:

- External Governors. The meeting noted that there were two governors who were coming to the end of their second term of office:
  - Peter Tyndale (November 2023)
  - Anthony Haines (December 2023)

TR informed the meeting that the Strategy Search and Governance Committee (15 November 2023) had considered the proposal for Anthony Haines (AH) to be re-appointed as a Board Member of TWFCG for an 'exceptional' third term of office of two years. The Board was reminded of AH's specialist knowledge as an employee of the ESFA and detailed funding knowledge which had been especially useful for the Board and the Exec management team at the college over the last year. The CEO was especially keen to maintain this specialist skill set on the Board for the next two years. AH's input and challenge as a member of Audit Committee was especially valuable; it was AH who had suggested that the CEO should contact the FE Commissioner and undertake the curriculum planning project work.

***It was AGREED that Anthony Haines be re-appointed as a Board Member of TWFCG for a two-year period until 31 December 2025.***

***[Anthony Haines rejoined the meeting.]***

9.2

**Attendance Report 2022/23**

The Director of Governance (TR) presented a report which provided the attendance data by individual governors and for sub-committees and the Corporation during 2022/23. TR reminded the meeting that individual governor's attendance data had to be included within the narrative section of the College Financial Statements.

TR confirmed that this report had been considered at the Strategy Governance & Search Committee on 15 November 2023 and the strong attendance data for 2022/23 was commended. TR highlighted the importance of maintaining good attendance at Board and Committee meetings in order to ensure attendance targets were met and to ensure that decisions could be made with sufficient informed members. The detailed attendance at Committees and the Board was noted. TR reminded the meeting that the College target for attendance at Board meetings was 75%, and this is mirrored for the Committee meetings. The meeting noted that 2022/23 attendance at Board meetings was 80% (76% in prior year). The sub-committee attendance ranged from 75% to 94% so had met the target in all cases and exceeded for the majority of sub-committees. Overall attendance at Board and sub-committees was 81% (76% prior year). TR confirmed that any instances of poor attendance on an individual level had been challenged during 2022/23 but she always remained mindful that Governors had other external commitments alongside their WFCG governance duties.

***The Attendance Report 2022/23 was NOTED.***

9.3

**Policy Approvals**

The meeting considered the following updated policies which had been considered in detail by the Strategy Governance & Search (SG&S) Committee on 15 November 2023:

- Updated Code of Conduct for Corporation Members (based on the recently updated Eversheds eighteenth version).
- Updated set of all sub-committee Terms of Reference: Audit, Resources, Quality & Curriculum, Strategy Governance & Search, Remuneration Committees, and Capital Development Steering Group (biennial review).
- WFCG Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (biennial review).

***The meeting APPROVED the eight WFCG policies outlined above – as presented – as recommended by the SG&S Committee.***

All Members were agreed.

➤ **Adoption of new AoC Code of Good Governance**

TR presented a proposal for the Board to adopt the new AoC Code of Good Governance which had been recently published. Governors were reminded that TWFCG had adopted the previous version of this Code which was published in 2015. TR highlighted that the new Code had been developed as the previous version had now become unwieldy with 10 principles and 32 pages of requirements. The new code was centred around six Governance Principles:

- Determination of organisational aims and strategic oversight.
- Responsibility and accountability.
- Leadership and integrity.
- Collaboration and stakeholder engagement.
- Regulatory compliance.
- Board and organisational effectiveness.

TR confirmed that the new governance code had been developed by the sector, for the sector, and it would apply to all FE institutions including sixth form colleges. TR asserted that she believed that the new code met its aim to elevate governance standards and would provide a sound basis for External Governance Reviews. It would also offer assurance to stakeholders and allows the Corporation to monitor how they met regulatory requirements. TR was proposing that the new AoC Code of Governance was adopted by TWFCG and used for the self-assessment 2023/24; this proposal was also being recommended by SG&S Committee after they considered the Code on 15 November 2023. Governors sought assurance on the suitability of the AoC template for assessment against the new code and the Director of Governance confirmed that this seemed fit for purpose and would be used in autumn 2024.

***The Board APPROVED the adoption of the new AoC FE Code of Good Governance 2023 to be used for governance self-assessment 2023-24.***

***The Governance update report was NOTED and RECEIVED.***

10. **Governance Self-Assessment 2022-23**

The meeting noted a detailed governance self-assessment for 2022/23 and an associated Improvement Plan for 2023/24. The Director of Governance (TR) presented the following documents for Corporation Members review and assurance:

- A summary of narrative comments from individual governors.
- Review of progress against governance action plan 2022-23.
- Assessment against English Colleges Code of Good Governance
- Bourneville checklist
- Assessment and action plan against the HMT Managing Public Money Guidelines (resulting from reclassification of college into the public sector, November 2022).

The meeting agreed with the assessment of governance at TWFCG during 2022/23. Governance at TWFCG had been effective and the new Board formed on 1 August 2022 had developed a good team dynamic during the first-year post-merger. The Director of Governance confirmed that she had reviewed compliance with the currently adopted FE Code of Good Governance with findings considered by the Audit Committee, Strategy Governance & Search (SG&S) Committee and the Board. The detailed governance self-assessment paperwork – including narrative feedback from individual governors - was discussed at SG&S Committee in November 2023 and the resulting Governance Improvement Plan was now being brought to the Board for approval. The meeting commended the level of detail within the self-assessment including the very 'rich' narrative comments received from individual governors. It was agreed that this detailed paperwork against different elements of governance and regulation provided good assurance for governors that there were meeting their statutory duties and good governance standards.

The meeting considered and approved the six key actions which were being recommended by the Strategy Governance and Search (SG&S) Committee to form the Governance Improvement Plan 2023/24:

- i) To establish a Mirror Board at TWFCG in order to improve the diversity of perspectives considered by the Board. The aim is to better represent the socio economic, ethnicity profile and gender of the College Group and the communities we serve, whilst maintaining an appropriate skills base.
- ii) The development of the Governor Link programme to encourage better engagement from Governors. To include contact with curriculum area throughout the year and participation in termly Quality Review Boards (QRBs) and self-assessment.
- iii) Improved information (rather than data) to all sub-committees and Board meetings to enable governors to focus on key areas of strength and weakness. All paper authors to provide clear executive summaries for all papers.
- iv) Continue to oversee the development of robust safeguarding arrangements to ensure outstanding practice for safeguarding, Prevent and British Values.



MINUTE NO.		ACTION
	<p>v) Succession Planning for future Board and sub-committee membership to ensure that the Board maintains the correct balance of skills and experience as the College moves into new curriculum areas e.g. creative and screen industries.</p> <p>vi) Increased support and mentoring for student and staff governors.</p> <p>The Chair reminded the meeting of the external governance review that was being undertaken by Rockborn and the additional input to governance improvement that this would provide.</p> <p><b>The meeting NOTED and RECEIVED the comprehensive Self-Assessment exercise 2022/23 and APPROVED the Governance Improvement Plan for 2023/24.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: Governance Action Plan to be a standing item for review on SG&amp;S Committee agenda.</b></p>	TR/ SG&S
11.	<p><b><u>'Mirror Board' proposal</u></b></p> <p>The CEO/ Group Principal (GM) provided an update on the Mirror Board programme which would be designed to create a diverse pipeline of future leaders across the organisation. It would offer a comprehensive development package, including reciprocal mentoring with WFCG board members and various learning opportunities. Mirror Board members recruited from a diverse background would have a direct voice in decision-making processes, influencing agenda items considered by the Corporation. The Mirror Board – with a membership from key stakeholder groups - would consider specific governance issues and provide their feedback and a different viewpoint to the Corporation when they were making decisions.</p> <p>The meeting noted the proposed timeline for the project which would be developed working with an external consultant from the health sector. GM highlighted that the programme had now been costed and would incur a cost of £20,000, spread across two years, to facilitate the development opportunities and logistical arrangements for the programme.</p> <p>The meeting agreed that this interesting concept – which was new to the FE sector - would help the Board gain access to a more diverse range of views; the benefit of having a 'lived experience' input to decision making was noted. TC confirmed that this proposal had been considered in detail at the last SG&amp;S Committee meeting (15 November) and was being recommended for approval.</p> <p><b>It was AGREED that the Mirror Board proposal should be taken forward as proposed over the next two years at an overall cost of £20,000.</b></p> <p>All Members were agreed</p>	GM/ TR
12.	<p><b><u>Risk Register</u></b></p> <p>The Group Principal (GM) presented the Risk Register for 2023/24 which continued to be reviewed and updated by SLT. Corporation Members noted the highest scoring risks and the update narrative explaining current mitigation and assurance levels.</p> <p><b><u>Risk 1 Failure to meet budget forecast (risk score remains at 16 'amber')</u></b>: The CEO informed the meeting that this risk would be considered further in agenda item 17 – Finance Directorate report. The upwards pressure on pay was still a very real concern.</p> <p><b><u>Risk 2 Uncertainty and risks associated with emerging national curriculum reforms (risk score remains at 12 'amber')</u></b>: This key risk was being well managed and senior staff were fully engaged in advisory groups linked to reform.</p> <p><b><u>Risk 3 External Safeguarding Risks (risk score remains at 12 'amber')</u></b>: The meeting was assured that the Executive Team continued to work with all relevant agencies in relation to any safeguarding incidents. The update on Safeguarding Reporting – in relation to new requirements around filtering and monitoring – had been considered earlier in the meeting.</p> <p><b><u>Risk 4 Poor student outcome data at Langley results in a challenge to the Good Ofsted rating (risk score reduced to 12 'amber' from 16)</u></b>: The meeting was informed that the Langley data had improved for 2022/23.</p>	

The CEO highlighted that there were three risks that were now recommended for removal from the risk register as the risk had diminished or was within an acceptable 'target' range:

- Risk 8: ONS reclassification of the status of colleges as public sector organisations (***Audit Committee oversight***)
- Risk 9: Lack of collaboration regionally - White Paper and 'Colleges of the Future' drive direction to a regional curriculum resulting in underfunding/loss of curriculum growth opportunity ***Quality & Curriculum Committee***
- Risk 14: LGPS deficit increase could be significant (especially following next triennial valuation) and TPS contributions could increase significantly. (***Audit Committee & Resources Committee oversight.***)

The meeting agreed with the rationale for removing these risks from the strategic risk register.

***Members NOTED and RECEIVED the updated College Risk Register.***

***ACTION: Risks 8, 9 and 14 (as detailed above) to be removed from the Strategic Risk Register.***

TR/ Exec

13. **College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2022/23**

• **Progress Since last Ofsted Inspection**

The CEO/ Group Principal presented a paper from the curriculum leadership team which gave the Board a clear overview on progress made against the Requires Improvement subgrades from the last Ofsted inspections at TWFCG and BCA (2019). Governors were reminded that in 2019, prior to merger, The Windsor Forest Colleges Group (WFCG) received an Ofsted subgrade of 'Requires Improvement' for its high needs provision. Similarly, Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) received a subgrade of 'Requires Improvement' in 2019 for its Apprenticeship provision. The meeting was assured that post-merger, good leadership in these areas has brought about clear improvement in both High Needs Provision and Apprenticeship Provision and the college had self-assessed both areas as 'good' for the academic year 2022-23. Governors also noted that the new group had separately identified the need to improve personal development for students across the four colleges. GM highlighted that the group had self-assessed as having made 'reasonable progress' in the academic year 2022-23 for personal development.

The meeting noted the details of the improvements and the assessed progress in each of the three area for improvement. Progress made in High Needs provision was assessed as 'significant' and the other two areas as 'good progress'

***NOTED***

• **Headline College Summary**

The CEO/ Group Principal (GM) presented a paper which provided the consolidated headline data for outcomes for learners 2022/23. The meeting noted the performance – achievement and retention - by college and level of provision against prior year and national rates. Governors were pleased to note the strong overall completion/ pass rate of 94.3% compared with the national average of 90.9% and the prior year WFCG figure of 90.8%. The retention rates were also above national average figures - Level 1 at 92.9% (National Rate [NR] of 91.1%); Level 2 at 92.9% (NR of 91.1%) and Level 3 at 89.8% (NR 89.6%) apart from Entry Level which was just below the NR at 89.5% (NR 92.4%). GM assured the meeting that there was a back story to explain this lower retention in all cases – entry level students had been moved to different courses for their own benefit but this impacted the raw data. The retention data against EDI characteristics was noted – there were no gaps based on gender. In relation to ethnicity there was a gap in retention data for Asian/ Asian British learners – 88.4% against the NR of 93.4% - which would be included on the Langley College Improvement Plan. There was also a small gap with Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British retention data – 90.2% against the NR of 92.9% - this was also an improvement action for 2023/24. The meeting noted the detailed Functional Skills and GCSE English and maths data. GM confirmed that



there were fewer Functional Skills learners in 2022/23 as many had moved over to GCSEs; the College aim was to get as many learners to Grade 4 as possible. GM highlighted the positive data on page 24 where the college performance in grade progress could be seen against the national average. GM highlighted that this college summary obscured the four very different colleges with very different data but this detailed data was being used within each of the colleges at a department level.

The meeting noted the EDI data and the governors were informed that the Principal FE (AE) was doing some work to analyse this further.

The meeting received the detailed Self-Assessment Reports for each of the areas of provision; these had been discussed in detail at the Quality & Curriculum Committee meeting (30 November 2023). It was noted that these individual SARs were written in a consistent style and tried to adopt an Ofsted approach and terminology.

- **Sixth Form (SF)**

The meeting took the detailed SAR as read and noted the detailed Quality Improvement Plan and the seven actions that would take the sixth form at TWFCG towards an 'Outstanding' Ofsted grade:

- Improve two-year retention rates on Level 3 courses to be in line with College KPI and secure improved achievement rates
- Ensure consistency in high grade achievement in identified A Level subjects
- Improve GCSE Maths high grades (9-4) to pre-Covid levels
- Ensure no differential between student groups, in particular:
  - Achievement of 19+ males to be in line with 19+ females
  - Close the gap between achievement of 16-18 learners and 19+ learners.
  - Achievement of African learners to be at least as good as SFCA and GFE averages
- Improve value added scores on identified L3 courses
- Secure consistent engagement of all courses with local, regional, and national priorities
- Develop opportunities to share good practice across the Sixth Form provision to ensure consistently high-quality TL&A and learner experience.

***The Sixth Form SAR 2022/23 and QIP 2023/24 report was NOTED and RECEIVED.***

- **Further Education (FE)**

The meeting noted the detailed justification for the self-assessed grades of 'Good - 2' for Overall Effectiveness, Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, and Leadership & Management. The meeting also noted the self-assessed grade of 'Requires Improvement - 3' for Personal Development. The rationale for this grade 3 in Personal Development and the areas flagged for improvement were noted in the detailed paperwork:

Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24 The areas for improvement and future development 2023/24 in FE were noted as follows:

- Improving the quality of Level 2 programmes to align with Level 1/ Entry level and Level 3 standards.
- Implementing targeted action plans for improvement in construction and motor vehicle.
- Strengthening support for adult learners and apprentices in English and Maths.
- Ensuring uniformity in attendance and optimising the design of study programmes.
- Broadening opportunities for social action projects and elevating the quality of careers advice.
- Pursuing Turing Scheme funding to enrich students' experiences.

- Enhancing communication, transparency, and ensuring consistent Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for staff.

***The Further Education SAR 2022/23 and QIP 2023/24 report was NOTED and RECEIVED.***

- **Higher Education**
- **Adult provision**

The meeting noted that the Quality & Curriculum Committee had considered a detailed SAR 2022/23 and QIP 2023/34 for both the HE and specific Adult provision at the College.

14.

**Annual Internal Audit Report**

The meeting noted the internal audit report from Mazars which was presented by the Deputy CEO (RM). The meeting noted that the Annual Report from Mazars did not contain any 'opinion' in terms of assurance as the planned internal audit programme had not taken place. Due to the pressure of merger work within the Finance Team there had only been two audits undertaken, looking at Payroll and Learner Numbers.

***The meeting NOTED and RECEIVED the internal audit annual report from Mazars***

14.1

**Internal Audit Strategy 2023/24**

RM presented a paper which outlined the final draft of the internal audit plan for 2023/24. It was noted that this was now agreed with Mazars. RM confirmed that the proposals had considered a number of factors, including the College's latest strategic plan and risk register 2023/24, the previous internal audits carried out in the College and the experience of the range of audits and their findings at other Colleges. The planned programme of work for 2023/24 being suggested by the Executive Team was as follows:

- Student Funding and Learner Numbers (ILR), to be completed in spring/ early summer 2024
- Bursary and financial support for learners, to be completed in March 2024
- Financial Management and Reporting Systems, based on January Management Accounts, to be completed in April 2024
- Key financial controls (purchasing and procurement) to be completed by April 2024
- Safeguarding practice (assessed through Leaders in Safeguarding), to be completed in January/ February 2024
- Review of cyber security processes and procedures

The meeting noted that it had not been possible to get the Purchasing and Procurement audit done before Christmas due to the pressure of work with the Financial Statements Audit and the ESFA Funding Audit. However, this would be a priority for 2024. RM confirmed that the proposed plan would involve 40 days of Mazars' time, which was in line with the initial plan for 2022/23. RM reminded the meeting that the College was currently tendering for internal and external audit provision from 1 August 2024. He confirmed that when the new internal and external auditors were appointed he would work with them to put together a longer-term plan and strategy for internal audits over a three-year period.

RM confirmed that to date the externally commissioned tender – via Tenet Procurement – had received four responses for the internal audit contract but only two for external audit. The outcome of this tender would be brought to the Audit Committee in March for consideration (and onward recommendation to the Board). Governors sought assurance on whether there should be concern as there were only two tenders for external auditors and the course of action if one were to withdraw. RM confirmed that the anecdotal evidence within the sector was that external audit firms did not currently have a big appetite for FE College contracts. The Chair of Resources (SF) confirmed that this was also true within the HE sector. RM assured the meeting that Tenet would develop an action plan to deal with any issue if there was only one tenderer; governors suggested that this might involve actively approaching individual audit firms. It was noted that it was unlikely that either of the two external tenderers would pull out as there had been substantial work involved in submitting the bid via Tenet.

**Members NOTED the report and APPROVED the proposed internal audit coverage 2023/24.**

All Members were agreed.

15.  
15.1

**TWFCG: External Audit Management Report & 2022/23 Financial Statements**

➤ **TWFCG Financial Statements 2022-23**

The Deputy CEO (RM) who had led the external audit 2022/23 presented the College's financial statements. Members noted that the narrative within this document was still in draft format but the numbers had now all been finalised and were very unlikely to change. Members were advised that the current financial position presented was an operational deficit of £1.048m excluding FRS102 charges. However, due to the ongoing ESFA-commissioned Funding Audit the accounts were not yet finalised (the ongoing testing on apprenticeship funding which was undertaken at short-notice by PWC) was causing further delay to RSM finalising the Financial Statements. Although verbal feedback from PWC had indicated that there would be no material clawback but this was not yet formally confirmed. RM informed the meeting that the likely maximum for any funding clawback was noted as £30,000 which would not be considered 'material' to the financial statements. RM assured the meeting that he had contacted the ESFA to make them aware of this delay and they were prepared to extend the deadline for the submission of the accounts from 31 December 2023 to the end of January 2024. RM confirmed that the PWC Funding Report was expected to be finalised week commencing 18 December or – more likely - after the Christmas break. Governors expressed their disappointment that the College was having to ask for an extension to the filing deadline from the ESFA. The meeting sought, and was given, assurance that the Finance Team at TWFCG had done all that they could to facilitate a timely outcome for the Funding Audit.

***Governors suggested that the College should send a complaint to the ESFA about the late re-testing undertaken by PWC and the poor communication during the funding audit.*** If nothing else this would make them aware of the issues being experienced by colleges selected for this random audit.

**GM/ RM**

RM highlighted that the accounts had been constructed on a merger basis i.e. as if the two colleges had been together forever; the prior year figures were the pre-merger WFCG plus BCA. The meeting went on to consider the numbers within the accounts and the accompanying notes. The Deputy CEO highlighted the following:

- The Statement of Comprehensive Income (SoCI) – effectively the I&E - was based on the July 2023 closing position and reflected the EBITDA (this measure was now used rather than operating surplus/ deficit).
- The outcome position on the SoCI was lower than the prior year due to merger costs, higher energy costs (£433k), and the fact that in 2021/22 the legacy WFCG received £741k income for access rights at Strode's College.
- Reserves increased by £6m in the year; there had been a favourable movement in the LGPS deficit (+ £9m).
- Cash was £2m lower than the prior year which was explained by the cashflow statement.
- The final Restructuring Costs in relation to the merger would be significantly more than currently shown @ £926,000; this was not an increase but reflected movement between lines).

The Chairs of Audit Committee and Resources Committee confirmed that the financial statements and Audit Findings Report had been considered in detail at the recent sub-committee meetings. The Deputy CEO highlighted that the SOCI (I&E) was in line with the forecast negative EBITDA of £159,000. RM explained the movement compared with prior year and highlighted that Reserves had increased by £6m. The Chair questioned the cash position and why there was a significant difference. RM cited higher than forecast merger costs; the WFCG budget had allowed for £1.08m but merger costs to date were circa £2m.

The Chair asked for further clarification on this difference as governors needed to understand why merger costs had been so much higher than forecast. RM suggested that the merger Due Diligence process had calculated the budgeted merger costs. In addition, the forecast cost of pay harmonisation had been £260,000 and this had amounted to £500,000 in reality during 2022/23.

Going Concern Judgement

The meeting sought confirmation on the Going Concern judgement and the Deputy CEO (RM) confirmed that RSM had not raised any issue in relation to this judgement. RM confirmed that the reforecast budget 2023/24 and plan 2024/25 had been submitted to RSM to inform their judgement.

The Chair asked for their thanks to be passed on to the external auditors at RSM and all of the Finance Team at TWFCG for their work to date on the external audit which had been more complicated this year.

**Members APPROVED the presented version of the 2022/23 Financial Statements with the proviso that any changes post-funding audit should be immaterial and not affect the numbers or narrative.**

**ACTION:**

- i) Any material changes to the Financial Statements 2022/23 to be reported to Governors.**
- ii) The confirmed final version of the Financial Statements 2022/23 to be circulated to Governors as soon as submitted to the ESFA.**

15.2

➤ **Audit Findings Report**

The meeting considered the Post-audit Management Report provided by RSM which – subject to completion of a number of outstanding items – was anticipated to provide an unqualified audit opinion on both the Financial Statements audit and the associated Regularity Audit. The main item to be finalised was in relation to the ESFA Funding Audit.

RM highlighted the potential audit, accounting and regularity issues identified at the audit planning stage: income recognition; management override; completeness of other income; pension scheme liability; going concern; regularity (including reclassification to the public sector); and accounting for the merger between BC and TWFCG on 1 August 2022. There had been no issues identified against these key risk areas during the audit. The audit had identified adjusted audit misstatements of £317,884 relating to pre-year end invoices. The meeting was pleased to note that there had been no significant deficiencies in internal control identified during the audit but there were five recommendations on controls (none of which were categorised as significant). The meeting noted the detail of these five recommendations which had been accepted by management and SM highlighted that the management responses had been helpful and detailed. There had been nothing to report around management override of controls or any deficiencies in internal control.

Letters of Representation

The meeting noted the letter of representation for the financial statements which was in the standard format required by the Audit Code of Practice.

15.3

➤ **Regularity self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ)**

The meeting was reminded that the Regularity Audit report from RSM had been considered within the Audit Findings Report and the unqualified regularity opinion was noted. The meeting noted the draft Regularity Audit Self-Assessment questionnaire 2022/23 for TWFCG which had been updated to reflect reclassification into the public sector. The meeting agreed that this document was a useful source of assurance for Governors.

The Chair thanked the external auditors at RSM (in their absence) and the Finance Team at the College for a set of clear and comprehensive reports.

**The meeting NOTED and RECEIVED:**

- a) *The external auditor's post-audit management report.*
- b) *The Letters of Representation*
- c) *The regularity self-assessment questionnaire for TWFCG.*

16. **Annual Report of the Audit Committees 2022/23**

The Director of Governance (TR) presented the Annual Audit Committee Report 2022/23. The meeting was reminded that the purpose of this report was to provide assurance to the Corporation from the Audit Committee on the adequacy and effectiveness of controls and risk mitigation in place. The meeting was reminded that Annual Audit Committee Report was a mandatory requirement within the Post 16 Joint Audit Code of Practice. TR highlighted that this annual audit committee report would be submitted to the ESFA to accompany the financial statements from each of the colleges. The assessment of the auditors would be appended to the Audit Committee Annual Report before it was submitted to the ESFA.

***Members RECEIVED the WFCG Audit Committee's annual report 2022/23 which provided assurance for the Board.***

***ACTION: This Audit Committee Report would be submitted to the ESFA to accompany the Financial Statements 2022/23.***

All Members were agreed.

17. **Finance Directorate Report**

The Deputy CEO (RM) presented a report which explained the move from 'Good' to 'Requires Improvement' for financial health for FY23 and the ongoing financial challenges in FY24.

The detailed discussion and actions are minuted in a Part II confidential minute.

➤ ***Management Accounts October 2023***

The meeting noted the Management Accounts which had been circulated to all Governors in advance of the meeting.

➤ ***Annual ESFA Letter confirming Financial Health Grade for TWFCG***

The meeting noted the letter and the accompanying dashboard from the ESFA which confirmed their assessment of the College's financial health after their review of the financial plan 2022/23 to 2024/25. The meeting noted that this confirmed financial health grades of Requires Improvement 2022/23 (not Good as self-assessed) and Good for 2023/24. This would now be forecast as RI as discussed earlier in the meeting.

***The ESFA Letter and Dashboard of BCA's Financial Health was NOTED and RECEIVED.***

18. **Academic Report 2023/24**

18.1 **Performance against KPIs year-to-date**

The meeting noted an update report on enrolment and retention 2023/24 and performance year-to-date against the College KPIs. The meeting commended the strong enrolment across the College Group for 2023/24 which had been maintained throughout the crucial six-week census period. GM highlighted that growth at the end of this period stood at 6% on the prior year for 16-18 learners (243 learners). Retention on 16-18 courses was 96.1% YTD and retention on adult courses was 100%. The detailed attendance data by learner type was also discussed. The meeting discussed attendance in more detail and noted that this continued to be an area for focus. The detail of this report along with the corresponding report on HE, Adult and Apprenticeships was taken as read as Governors agreed that this item had already been covered in discussing the detailed SAR's 2022/23 and QIPs 2023/24. The detailed Risk Register for Apprenticeships was also taken as read.

***The monitoring reports on in-year performance 2023/24 – 16-18, Higher Education, Adult and Apprenticeships were NOTED.***

19. **Annual Safeguarding Report 2022/23**

Principal FE presented a comprehensive Safeguarding annual report which reflected a robust commitment to student safety and well-being. Governors noted the progress made post-merger and the new initiatives implemented in the academic year 2022-23 to protect and safeguard all learners.

The report highlighted operational excellence with diligent safeguarding, bursary, and learning support teams ensuring student needs were met. Clear leadership structures, designated safeguarding leads, and child looked after leads had contributed to a proactive approach. AE highlighted the post-merger efforts to streamline processes, align internal structures and introduce a Safeguarding Director, which had positively impacted the student community.

Governors were assured that in response to digital challenges, TWFCG had implemented strong filtering and monitoring systems. Regular meetings were held involving senior safeguarding leads, the Director of Digital and IT professionals which ensured a proactive stance on online safety. A range of diverse tutorial programmes and induction activities had addressed student awareness of risks, backed by strong ties with external agencies.

The report also contained detailed learner voice feedback which had indicated a high percentage feeling safe, with specific concerns addressed through targeted interventions. Case studies illustrated effective responsive actions, and staff training covers critical areas, fostering a comprehensive safeguarding framework. AE confirmed that mental health concerns continued to be a focus and these guided proactive planning and interventions.

Governors were pleased to note that to ensure consistency across the four college sites, a fortnightly Strategic Safeguarding Board had been created which allowed for a joined-up approach which still reflected student cohorts across all four campuses. The meeting was assured that all four colleges had strong links with external agencies including local Police forces, children and adult social care, drugs and alcohol teams, virtual schools, domestic violence, counselling services etc. The College Safeguarding Teams were focussed on ensuring timely referrals for students so that they could receive the right support at the right time. The detailed data by College on referrals to external agencies during 2022/23 was noted.

The meeting noted that all concerns were recorded on the CPOMS system (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) under various categories including behaviour, mental health, and safeguarding. This data allowed the safeguarding team to respond appropriately and be proactive in planning the safeguarding improvement plan, student tutorials and staff training. The 2022/23 data had shown that across all four sites the category most reported was mental health concerns (1,029) - this included anxiety, self-harm and suicidal thoughts. AE assured the meeting that this data reflected the national trend which showed that in the last three years, the likelihood of young people having a mental health problem had increased by 50% with 1 in 6 children aged 5-16 now being likely to have a mental health problem. Other serious safeguarding concerns included: Domestic Abuse (45 cases), Sexual Abuse (42), gang and weapon violence (31), and Child on Child - including online – (29).

Other safeguarding activity during the year was noted as follows:

- Langley College held a safeguarding week in April where guest speakers delivered workshops and information stands were available on site.
- BCA had guest speakers from the police and other organisations delivering workshops on “keeping safe” and mental health.
- At the Sixth Form Colleges there was a more limited access to counsellors. There was a 3-day-a-week post across both sites but as a result of identifying the above key trends in FE the counselling provision was reviewed and expanded to increase access to student counsellors at Strode's. Safeguarding awareness campaigns were delivered across the year through visiting speakers and via the Tutorial Curriculum. In February 2023, both Strode's and Windsor ran a wellbeing week which included a focus on mental health and personal safety, with visiting speakers, workshops and awareness events.



- All colleges also promoted the WFCG [Health and Wellbeing Hub](#), which was updated with additional information and resources as new themes emerged. The meeting commended this useful resource which covered so many subjects which may help learners.

➤ Training and Professional Development for Staff 2022/23

The meeting noted the comprehensive Safeguarding training that had been delivered throughout 2022/23 to all staff. Training had been delivered in a number of areas that reflected contextualised safeguarding and the areas for development at each campus including:

- Safeguarding KCSIE 2022 update (beginning of year)/ Annual Safeguarding Training
- PREVENT update
- Local risks
- Suicide awareness
- Contextual awareness of local crime for all staff
- How to receive and record disclosures
- ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Specialist staff training offered (including pastoral staff and safeguarding leads) had included:

- DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) training
- Counselling skills
- Violence against women and girls
- Domestic violence (Thames Valley Police - "cut it out")
- Trauma Informed Practice
- Understanding Self Harm

➤ Update on Safeguarding year-to-date 2023/24

The meeting noted that in the current academic year (2023-24), challenges included increased demand for bursary support and safeguarding referrals. Learner feedback had shown a preference for ongoing awareness campaigns and adaptations to address specific concerns.

Governors were reminded that TWFCG had an extremely diverse student population across its four campuses. Both FE colleges had students with a range of backgrounds and ethnicities as well as disabilities. BCA had the highest number of students with EHCP/Disabilities and Langley had the highest number of looked after students (CLA) which was currently 96; this was mainly due to the increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seekers.

In 2023/24 Langley's Bursary figures have increased from 527 to 700 (BCA 279) which gives a clear indication of the challenges a high proportion of students were facing in relation to finance. Often these challenges can impact on attendance, retention and achievement. Since the beginning of term, September 2023, Langley has received 49 safeguarding referrals via CPOMS (the college's new recording system) and the BCA team has received 82.

Strode's and Windsor College have fewer EHCP learners though the ALS team support over 700 learners requiring access arrangements for learning needs and so are an integral part of the safeguarding provision. The sixth form provision currently had 9 CLA and 3 registered carers. Since the beginning of term there had been 150 referrals to the safeguarding team (82 Strode's and 68 Windsor). The meeting noted the learner survey data from the enrolment survey 2023.

The Chair thanked AE for the detailed update and commended the useful case studies which had been included in the report to give Governors a clear understanding of the type of safeguarding cases that staff were dealing with on a regular basis. AE reminded the meeting that an external audit of all elements of Safeguarding at TWFCG would be undertaken by specialist external consultants Leaders in Safeguarding in January 2024.

**Members NOTED the report.**

20. **Annual Human Resources Report 2022/23**

The meeting noted the Human Resources Annual Report 2022/23 which covered recruitment and selection, staff turnover, sickness absence, and the staff profile by protected characteristics. It was noted that the HR Director would be looking to amend the format of the Annual HR Report for future years as the staff data had limited value without detailed analysis and an action plan. GM confirmed that the HR Team were currently developing key performance indicators for governors and to provide managers with real-time information. HR were working with managers to establish what needed to be done differently.

Recruitment The meeting noted the current situation with a candidate-led market. There had been an increased number of roles advertised during the year (up 35%) and it had been hard to get staff for some of the roles. This had not been helped by the current length of the recruitment process at TWFCG. Although much of this was due to the safeguarding requirements of KCSIE, the HR Team were working to reduce the timeframe. The total headcount across the four colleges was now 962 employees: 423 academic, 509 support and 31 management.

Staff Turnover: At 20% overall this was broadly the same as the prior year and in line with the AoC data. The rates by function were noted as: academic 17.8%, support 21.6% and management 22.6%. The meeting was reminded that the merger had impacted these figures.

Sickness: At an average figure of 4.26 days lost per employee this was just below the sector (4.4) and national average (5.7). Governors were assured that the college had strategies in place to manage both short-term and long-term sickness absence.

Staff profile: The meeting noted the profile of the College Group staff body by characteristic. The split by gender was 72.1% female and 27.9% male compared with the sector split of 64% female and 36% male; this explained the college Gender Pay Gap figure of 5.67% for legacy WFCG and 8.12% BCA against the ONS national average of 14.4%.

The meeting noted that a number of the characteristics had incomplete data as a proportion of staff had not yet declared against the characteristics; e.g. for disability 158 staff had not answered this question yet. The HR Team were about to go out to staff again to secure this data to take forward the Mirror Board work on EDI. The HR Director would be looking for a fuller data set for reporting 2023/24 but there was also a need to use the data to think about 'so what' and the resulting action plan. There was also a need to work on better communication with staff to reassure people on why the College wanted the staff profile data and what they would do with it.

The Resources Committee had considered this report on 28 November and Members had asked that future HR reports should contain expanded data on staff ethnicity with clear comparison against the student population which would be valuable on a college level as well as the Group. HR had agreed that it would be their aim to provide more insight with the data broken down by job group and level within the organisation.

**The Annual HR Report 2022/23 was RECEIVED.**

Staff Survey November 2023: The CEO (GM) presented the report which provided Governors with an overview of the outcome of the College's annual staff survey which had been undertaken during the last two weeks of October 2023 (closing on 3 November 2023). GM informed the meeting that the outcome report was very insightful and had highlighted some issues at BCA. These were in relation to merger harmonisation; the apparent mismatch with regard to pay equalization and some IT challenges that BCA staff faced over the summer as they were moved over to TWFCG systems. This had caused some disruption and concern with staff but governors were assured that most of the IT issues were now fully resolved. The meeting was assured that the overall satisfaction score was satisfactory. Pay progression was seen as an issue across all four colleges but probably reflected the current pressure on salaries with the Cost-of-Living increases. GM highlighted that the overall participation rate at just over 50% seemed low but she had been assured that this was a normal response rate. The next staff survey would be issued in spring 2024 and would be limited to BCA in order to see whether feedback was improved. Governors sought clarification on what management

did with the feedback and it was confirmed that the results and any themes were taken back to staff at Principal's briefings. It was also noted that any respondents had the opportunity to have a '1:1' meeting with a member of the Exec Team to discuss any ongoing concerns.

**NOTED**

21. **Annual Complaints Report 2022/23**

The meeting noted the annual Complaints Report for the Windsor Forest Colleges Group 2022/23. Governors were reminded that the College strategic priorities placed a high priority on the management of learners' experience, in particular learner satisfaction and its likely impact on the teaching and learning experience. The College therefore regarded complaints to be one of the key elements of the learner voice.

The meeting noted that there was a decrease in complaints from 28 in the prior year to 19. GM highlighted that BCA complaints were also included for the 2022/23 data and had not been included in the prior year figures. Of the 19 complaints received, 10 were upheld – 7 curriculum related and 3 in customer service. The meeting was assured that complaints were being dealt with in a timely and effective manner. Governors were given assurance on the very detailed nature of the complaint which had been carried over from the previous academic year. The EDI data breakdown in relation to the complaints was noted; there were no trends within this data.

AD highlighted that concerns within the sixth form hardly ever became formal complaints but it was agreed that it would be good for Governors to have some visibility on any concerns raised within the sixth form.

***The Complaints report was NOTED and RECEIVED***

22. **Annual Health & Safety Report 2022/23**

The Corporation meeting noted an update annual report provided by the Director of Health & Safety and Transport which included details of Health and Safety (H&S) Management at BCA, Incident Reporting, Training, Policy & Procedure, and Insurance Inspection and internal audit. The detailed report was taken as read but the following aspects were highlighted.

Incident Reporting and investigation: There had been 64 reported accidents/ near misses/ hazard observations during 2022/23 at BCA (50), Langley (8), Strode's (2) and Windsor (4). These were categorised as follows: 16 of these involved staff, 41 learners and 7 property. One incident – in relation to a member of staff at Langley College - was reported to HSE under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). In this case a member of staff twisted her ankle and fell on a missing drain cover in November 2022; the fall also caused injury to her hand. The new data on First Aid treatments was taken as read but the new electronic logging of these incidents was commended.

Training: Governors were assured that new starter inductions were mandatory for all new staff starters and for efficiency were offered via Teams. These were contextualised with a different format for BCA and Langley campuses and a separate version for the Sixth Form Windsor and Strode's campuses.

*First aid training* had been completed to cover shortfalls across the College Group and refresher training sessions for existing first aiders were completed in October 2022 and April 2023. A Three-day qualification for new first aiders took place in May 2023.

*Fire marshal training* took place in January, February, March and May 2013 for thirteen new marshals across BCA, Langley and Windsor.

*Fire warden* - including use of fire extinguishers - training took place in August 2023 for nine staff (8 from BCA and 1 from Windsor, the new Lab Technician).

Policies and procedure: Governors were assured that the Health and Safety Policies were now merged fully into a format suitable for all four sites and published in the updated WFCG format. Safety Policies and Procedures were reviewed and updated to reflect the arrangements in place for the College Group. Ideas for improvements and areas of good practice continued to be shared across all four College sites.

**Insurance Inspection And Internal Audit:** The meeting was given assurance around this important area of H&S work during 2022/23. Insurance inspections had been carried out across various areas of the College in accordance with The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulation 1998 (PUWER) and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER).

Internal Health and safety audits were carried out in April and May 2023 with all high-risk areas seen. This included Estates, Horticulture & Agriculture at BCA and Design & Technology at Strode's which were compliant. Other high-risk areas were assessed as partially compliant: Animal, Equine, Land Based and Motor Vehicle at BCA; and Construction, Engineering, Catering & Hospitality and Motor Vehicle at Langley. The meeting noted that partly compliant areas were revisited, training had been offered and these areas would be the first to be visited in 2023/24. Other lower risk areas were seen and assessed as compliant: Domestic Services, Business, Foundation, at BCA; Laboratories and IT on three sites; Estates, Hair and Beauty, Health & Social Care and Reception at Langley; Art and Design, Reception and Student Services at Windsor; and Student Services at Strode's.

***The Health and Safety Report 2022/23 was NOTED and RECEIVED.***

23. **Update on FE Commissioner Curriculum Planning Project (CEFSS)**

The meeting noted an update on the recent Curriculum Efficiency and Financial Sustainability Support (CEFSS) review that had been undertaken with the support of the FEC team. Although the full report was not yet available, the CEO (GM) had submitted a paper which outlined findings. Key findings highlighted were as follows:

- It was recommended that the college group should focus on developing a robust measurement system to assess the financial contribution of each programme area, particularly within the apprenticeship provision. This would help to identify areas of low financial contribution and enable strategic decision-making in programme offerings and curriculum design.
- It had been agreed that going forward, the financial contribution should be analysed and reported by both department and college campus. This additional breakdown will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the financial performance across different levels of the organisation.
- The FEC Team had suggested conducting a review of non-curriculum costs across the group. This would include leadership and management, student support, and back-office support functions. This review would be aimed at identifying areas where cost efficiencies could be achieved without compromising the quality of services provided. This review was scheduled to take place in January 2024.

GM informed governors that the Director of People had discussed this review with Trade Union representatives on 27 November to prepare them for the likelihood of some restructuring work. GM reminded the meeting that a recruitment freeze was now in place and the opportunity for staff to take reduced hours had been shared.

***The update report on the CEFSS work was RECEIVED.***

***ACTION: The FEC Team's Report to be brought to the next Board meeting via Audit Committee (March 2024).***

24. **Minutes from Strategy Governance & Search Committee – 15 November 2023**

The Chair of the Committee (TC) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda.

***The minutes were NOTED and RECEIVED***

25. **Minutes from Capital Development Steering Group – 23 November 2023**

The Chair of the Committee (JC) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda. Governors noted the ongoing delay with the land sale at BCA.

***The minutes were NOTED and RECEIVED***

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
26.	<p><b><u>Minutes from Resources Committee – 28 November 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Chair of the Committee (SF) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda.</p> <p><b><i>The minutes were NOTED and RECEIVED</i></b></p>	
27.	<p><b><u>Minutes from Audit Committee – 29 November 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Chair of the Committee (JC) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda including the Financial Statements Audit 2022/23.</p> <p><b><i>The minutes were NOTED and RECEIVED</i></b></p>	
28.	<p><b><u>Minutes from Quality &amp; Curriculum Committee – 30 November 2023</u></b></p> <p>TR apologised and informed the meeting that the minutes from the meeting were not yet available.</p> <p>The Chair of the Committee (TC) confirmed that the major matters considered by the meeting had been brought forward to the Board within the current agenda including the College Self-Assessment Report 2022/23 and the Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24.</p> <p><b><i>NOTED</i></b></p>	
29.	<p><b><u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings and Events</u></b></p> <p>The dates and times of future meetings were noted.</p> <p>TR confirmed that Corporation meetings were scheduled on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, 20 March 2024, 5.00pm at Langley College</li> <li>• Friday, 17 May 2024, 8am to 2pm Strategy Event and meeting (venue TBA)</li> <li>• Wednesday, 3 July 2024, 5.00pm at Langley College</li> </ul> <p><b><i>NOTED</i></b></p>	
30.	<p><b><u>Any Urgent Business</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Peter Tyndale</u></b></li> </ul> <p>The meeting recorded a vote of thanks to Peter Tyndale (PT) as it was his last meeting; PT's second term of office as a governor of WFCG (formerly East Berks College, EBC) had now ended. The Chair thanked PT for his input to governance over the last eight years and his part in the two successful mergers. All Members wished Peter Tyndale well for the future and thanked him for his contribution to governance at EBC and TWFCG.</p> <p>There was no other urgent business.</p> <p><b>The meeting ended at 7.25pm.</b></p>	

***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.***

***Staff and Student Governors were asked to leave the meeting as there were some Part II minutes which related to senior staff (Remuneration Committee minutes from 8 November 2023).***