



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 AT LANGLEY COLLEGE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY 2020

		<u>Meetings Attendance</u>
PRESENT:	Tony Dixon (Chair)	(5 out of 5)
	Kate Webb (Group Principal & Chief Executive)	(5 out of 5)
	Angela Wellings	(4 out of 5)
	David Knowles-Leak	(5 out of 5)
	Stuart Taylor	(5 out of 5)
	Martin Pritchett (by phone)	(4 out of 5)
	Peter Tyndale	(4 out of 5)
	Arden Bhattacharya	(5 out of 5)
	Tina Coates	(5 out of 5)
	Rob Lewis	(4 out of 5)
	Anthony Haines	(3 out of 5)
	Kiran Virdee	(2 out of 5)
	Daljit Bains	(3 out of 5)
	Natalie Viola	(4 out of 5)
	Athena Jamaranian	(5 out of 5)
	Jake Smith	(2 out of 3)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Graham Try (Deputy CEO)	
	Maxine Wood (Merger Project Director, Curriculum Transformation)	
CLERK:	Lynn Payne	(5 out of 5)

PART I

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	The meeting started at 6pm.	
1.	<u>Health & Safety Housekeeping</u> The Group Principal & Chief Executive advised Members of the fire exit and protocols.	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received from Shabnam Ali & Student Governor, Urwah Chaudhary.	
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> The Chair of the Board declared an interest in the item that would be considered under the recommendations from the Governance, Search & Strategy Committee relating to Chair of the Board. He said he would leave the meeting when that item was discussed and that it would be taken as the last item on the Pt II agenda for ease in this virtual meeting.	
4.	<u>Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on</u> a) <u>11 March 2020</u> The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 March 2020, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature was applied. All Members were agreed.	

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

b) 30 March 2020 – Written Resolution

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 March 2020 by Written Resolution, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature was applied.

All Members were agreed.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on

a) 11 March 2020

Members noted that there were no matters arising.

b) 30 March 2020 – Written Resolution

Members noted that there were no matters arising.

6. COVID-19 Response & Implications for the Future

This item was presented by the Group Principal, who advised Members that her report would form the main item of the Governor's development session on 15 May. The report set out the budget challenges facing The Windsor Forest Colleges Group (TWFCG) next year and the focus was COVID-19, as it would be without doubt, a main factor in future challenges in 2020/21 and potentially future opportunities. The Group Principal advised Members it would be vital to consider at this stage how to offer a safe, sustainable and innovative offer, in order to be sure that the risks of COVID-19 are mitigated and any new ways of working and other opportunities are grasped early.

She advised members it would be very important to be careful on how social distancing would work at the College. Before the Summer break there would be no cafeteria open, or public areas, and students would be invited in for pastoral support or practical work only. In the short-term, staff and student concerns regarding COVID-19 would be a primary consideration. The Group Principal confirmed that in September, there would be changes to the enrolment process with more online and smaller groups invited in to the College. Some elements of courses would remain online. Smaller class sizes would be enabled and there would be reduced timetables on site. She advised Members that, where some staff wanted to carry on working from home, and where that was possible, this would be considered. There would also be a delayed start to the term to help enrolment and staff plan online work. It would be important to consider the management of all the social areas to keep students and staff safe.

She advised members that a student survey indicated good levels of satisfaction with on-line learning in many cases, and a significant nervousness about the pandemic including travelling on public transport. She was therefore considering timetables for September that eliminated the need to travel at peak times to respond to this nervousness, and to help to protect and maximise enrolments. She explained that one risk was that year 11 students might feel safer and more secure on familiar territory (school) and might also be more likely to stay at school because of retakes. She suggested that a strong 'broadcasted' marketing message was needed, and the college needed to make sure it was communicating effectively with applicants, parents and schools. A marketing plan for the summer was currently underway.

The Group Principal advised Members, that the AoC estimates on students relating to the market context, were that there would be 30,000 16 & 17 year olds in England who would usually expect to start an Apprenticeship or work based learning programme in the coming academic year, who would now need alternative provision. There were 70,000 18 & 19 year olds in England who would usually be heading for employer based training, or the labour market who would now need alternative provision. There were also other pressures on available state funded 16+ education places, including a rise in population of young people, potential increases in transfers from private to state provision and the inevitable space constraints created by social distancing. The Group Principal said this might mean a significant increase in demand for full time study programmes and training for young adults. In Slough, a recent projection suggested rising unemployment in the local population, exacerbated by a downturn in Heathrow's fortunes. Members discussed the market context.

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

The Group Principal went through the challenges and opportunity scenarios. She confirmed these challenges and opportunities would be discussed at length at the Development Day on Friday. Members felt the overall plan, including potential opportunities, was excellent and would give the College a good boost and step forward. The Group Principal said she wanted to thank all the staff who had been involved in a mammoth effort to support students and how the benefits of new ways of working had arisen in a very short space of time. She also thanked the IT staff at the College who had managed to assist and enable a different way of working in a very short space of time.

Members noted the report and looked forward to the discussions on Friday.

7. College Headlines

This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members were informed of performance against high-level targets.

The Group Principal advised Members that because exams had been cancelled there would not be a published achievement rate this year, and this would be discussed further at the Quality & Curriculum Committee.

The report was taken as read and noted.

8. Strategic Plan

a. Annual Strategic Plan 2019/20 Update

This item was presented by the Group Principal, who asked Members for comment on the Strategic Action Plan update. She confirmed the Senior Leadership Team had updated it with a column on the Coronavirus.

Members asked questions and noted the updated action plan.

b. Risk Management Action Plan 2019/20 Update

This item was presented by the Deputy CEO. In summary, the Deputy CEO advised Members that the risks in the College's Risk Management Action Plan were covered in other reports on this agenda and there would be an extra challenge from COVID-19, on which there would be a discussion on the Pt II agenda.

Members discussed and asked questions about the Risk Management Action Plan.

The report was noted.

c. 2019/20 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The Group Principal updated Members on the QIP 2019/20. She advised Members that COVID-19 had interrupted the Quality Improvement Plan around key measures usually used. She reported that progression interviews had started. Members were invited to ask questions. There was a question on quality and was there a feel for the percentage number of students not engaging remotely? The Group Principal confirmed that since Easter engagement was being measured using the normal register system and the Promonitor system She said some courses courseware less successful on-line (such as the full time 16-18 ESOL course) but disengagement was tracked closely and personal tutors were liaising with individuals and parents/carers. One issue with engagement was accessibility to broadband and devices and the college had rapidly introduced a laptop loan scheme, and had also bought data and dongles for some students. Vulnerable students (EHCP and those with social workers) were being assiduously tracked and supported and engagement with relevant stakeholders was good. A more detailed report on this cohort would be brought to the Q&C Committee.

With regard to the Apprenticeship provision, feedback from employers to the breaks in learning was positive. She confirmed the College would apply for support from government to support affected learners. She also confirmed that the number of new apprenticeship starts was considered to be very small compared to normal. The DCEO mentioned that nationally apprenticeship starts were down 80%.

The report was noted.

MINUTE

NO.

9.

Safeguarding

a) Safeguarding Update

Members were advised on the safeguarding issues that had arisen over the year to date. The Group Principal advised members that the safeguarding duties had not changed because of Covid-19, but the way of working in relation to some safeguarding issues had changed. There was a discussion about the increased concern at large amongst local authorities concerned that some situations might be falling through the gap. Members reviewed the report which included good detail on numbers of vulnerable students (as defined by government) that were being supported by the college. The Group Principal confirmed that all vulnerable students were tracked and monitored, with good contact and engagement from most. A very small minority of individuals were more disengaged and the college was working closely with local authorities in these cases. The Vice Chair spoke about the rise of domestic violence and asked whether vulnerable students or any students were disclosing any issues of harm at home. The Group Principal confirmed that this had not been reported as a theme, but would speak to the DSL to highlight.

The report was noted.

b) Safeguarding Policy & Procedure Update

Members unanimously approved the Safeguarding Policy & Procedure Update.

10.

Reports from the Quality & Curriculum Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Quality & Curriculum Committee Meeting of 29 April 2020 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 29 April 2020. The Chair reported on the work of the committee in the last term.

i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

There were no recommendations to the Board for approval.

11.

Reports from the Governance, Search & Strategy Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Governance, Search & Strategy Committee Meeting of 29 April 2020 and oral Report from the Chair

It was noted that the minutes & recommendations of the meeting of 29 April 2020 would be considered at the end of the agenda for pragmatic reasons as Members would need to leave the virtual meeting whilst matters relating to them were being discussed.

b. Governors Appointment, Reappointment & Induction Policy & Procedure

Members considered the policy & procedure and it was approved.

12.

Reports from the Resources Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting of 6 May 2020 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the minutes of the meeting of 6 May 2020 would be on the agenda for the next Board meeting as the meeting had only just taken place.

To note the Minutes and agree the recommendations from the committee.

It was noted all recommendations from the committee would be considered as separate agenda items

b. Fees Policy

This item was presented by the Deputy CEO. He advised Members the Fees Policy had been to the Resources Committee, who recommended it to the Board for approval. He confirmed there was very little change to the policy compared with previous years.

Members unanimously approved the Fees Policy.

c. Health & Safety Summer Term Report 2019/20

The Deputy CEO provided a report on health & safety for the summer term.

The report was noted.

ACTION

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
13.	<u>Governance</u> a. <u>Corporation Business</u> The report was noted. b. <u>Approval of Application of Seal</u> There was no use of the Seal to report. All Members were agreed.	
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.	
15.	<u>Evaluation of Meeting</u> Members were pleased to complete an evaluation of the meeting, highlighting where they felt 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, 8 July 2020 at Langley College	
17.	<u>Any Urgent Business</u> There was no urgent business raised. The meeting ended at 6.50pm.	

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING BY MEMBERS

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

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

CHALLENGE

Safeguarding was discussed particularly in relation to vulnerable students during the Covid-19 pandemic

ADDED VALUE

Discussions around those students most affected by Covid-19. Courses that were not running. Disruption to apprentices and their programmes and how the future position looked for them.

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