



THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP CORPORATION BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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

HELD VIA ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020

		<u>Meetings Attendance</u>
PRESENT:	Tony Dixon (Chair)	(1 out of 1)
	Kate Webb (Group Principal & Chief Executive)	(1 out of 1)
	Angela Wellings	(1 out of 1)
	David Knowles-Leak	(1 out of 1)
	Stuart Taylor	(1 out of 1)
	Martin Pritchett	(1 out of 1)
	Peter Tyndale	(1 out of 1)
	Arden Bhattacharya	(1 out of 1)
	Tina Coates	(1 out of 1)
	Rob Lewis	(1 out of 1)
	Anthony Haines	(1 out of 1)
	Shabnam Ali	(1 out of 1)
	Mobolaji Alabi	(1 out of 1)
	Tom Wainwright	(1 out of 1)
	Aimee Malynn	(1 out of 1)
	Taha Hussain	(1 out of 1)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Graham Try (Deputy CEO)	
	Maxine Wood (Principal, Langley College)	
	Bernadette Joslin (Group Vice Principal, Student Services)	
	Ellie Wheeler (Head of Safeguarding & Pastoral Support)	
CLERK:	Lynn Payne	(1 out of 1)

PART I

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	The meeting started at 6pm.	
1.	<u>Health & Safety Housekeeping</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made for the two new Governors joining the Board.	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received from Kiran Virdee, Daljit Bains, Natalie Viola and Jake Smith.	
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> Rob Lewis and Angela Wellings declared their interest in relation to item 11 and recommendations that would be considered regarding their respective terms of office. It was noted they would leave the virtual meeting at the point their term of office was discussed and return to the meeting after the Board had considered the matter.	
4.	<u>Safeguarding Annual Update</u> This item was presented by the Head of Safeguarding (HoS) and the Group Vice Principal, Student Services (Group VPSS). Members received a comprehensive safeguarding annual update and there was a lengthy, interactive discussion on the detail in the presentation. The Head of Safeguarding advised Members that the College Ofsted report in 2019, had	

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

confirmed the arrangements for Safeguarding were effective. She detailed the College's legal duties and how Governors needed to ensure that the College met these. Safeguarding and child protection issues were detailed and discussed, including keeping children (all learners) safe from radicalisation and extremism. The Head of Safeguarding highlighted the areas for development in 2020/21, which included:-

- Support for increasing numbers of "at risk" students following lockdown
- Digital safety as remote learning continues
- Prevent/FBV
- Mental health
- Drugs education
- Ensuring the College's most vulnerable students are supported if there are further lockdowns.

It was noted members has been asked to complete the annual safeguarding training online.

The HoS spoke about the number of students who were in most need.. Members asked how the Executive were sure that nothing in the College's Safeguarding Policy conflicted with Government advice regarding Covid. The Group Principal advised Members that there was guidance on the Covid regulations and health and safety and safeguarding, and there was no conflict with Government policy. Members spoke about the levels of rising knife crime in the local area and were advised of the work in train by the college on education and partnerships.

The HoS and Group VPSS left the meeting.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 8 July 2020

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 July 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.**

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 8 July 2020

Members noted that there were no matters arising.

7. College Headlines

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

The report was considered and noted.

8. Period 12 Management Accounts & Provisional Outturn 2019/20

This item was presented by the Deputy CEO. Members were advised that the closing and preparation of the college's statutory accounts for 2019/20 were at an advanced stage and the external auditors were due to carry out their two week financial statements audit, commencing 19 October. The Deputy CEO advised Members that whilst there was final closing out work to be done and completed in the accounts, it was not anticipated that there would be any significant change to the overall position in the report.

The College's forecast year end income and expenditure position reported in the Period 12 Management Accounts was for a deficit of £2.054 million, which the Deputy CEO advised Members was £0.704 million higher than the £1.350 million approved deficit budget for the year. The Deputy CEO went through all the key points in the management accounts. It was noted the current level of cash was over £9 million, which included the £7.5 million receipt for the Langley land sale.

Members noted the report.

9. Strategic Plan

a. 2020/21 Annual Strategic Action Plan

This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members were asked to scrutinise, provide feedback and approve the action plan. This was based on the strategic priorities for one year that had been approved by the board after a number of discussion sessions in July 2020.

The Group Principal spoke about the move to seeking to engage in partnerships, which she advised might be a key feature of the new FE reforms in the currently awaited FE White Paper. The Chair of the Board spoke about the need to get involved with new potential partnerships and reminded members of the Slough Borough Council Growth Plan. The development strategy session in November will focus on this.

Members approved the Annual Strategic Action Plan 2020/21.

b. Risk Management Action Plan 2020/21

This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members noted the updated Risk Register, and in particular, the key risks. Members discussed the severe disruption and adverse impact to learners and College operations from the Coronavirus (Covid-19). The Group Principal reminded members the Coronavirus Advisory Group (CAG) and SPH meet to review and monitor arrangements, and at Officer level, the Senior Leadership Team and Head of Estates & Head of Health & Safety meet weekly in the Coronavirus Operational Group (COG).

The Group Principal referred to the levels of positive confirmed cases arising as a result of the Coronavirus, but that they were being managed well. Controls were in place and working and had minimised the number of students that needed to self-isolate. She confirmed there had been no evidence of transmission in the College but transmission in the community coming into the College.

The Group Principal advised members that the College was doing its best in this area, with support from the local Public Health England. The Covid-19 risks were very obvious being the risk to health, learning and achievement. She said that the quality of education and experience was adversely affected as many enrichment events could not happen in the normal way. She referred to good work done by staff to run virtual events and noted that student voice events remained strong. She noted that disruption because of self isolation was disruptive to learning, although the college had good mitigations in place. She noted that regular communications were being sent out to staff, students, parents and carers.

c. Enrolment, Funding & Growth 2020/21

This item was presented by the Group Principal. Members were asked to note the analysis of enrolment figures to date for 2020/21 and were reminded that the report was an early indicator of enrolment performance for 16-18 year olds but that the numbers may fluctuate until the census date in November, when the funded number would be confirmed. For adults and apprentices, it was noted that enrolment continued throughout the year. The Group Principal spoke about the 16-18 learner headcount across the College group, and that it was currently 26 above the recorded census number for this time last year, but there was a risk that if enrolment performance did not maintain, or improve in number, that by the November census date this year that the College might receive reduced funding in 2021/22. She confirmed that an updated analysis would be brought to the Q&C Committee meeting and Resources Committee meeting in November and then to the Board in December.

Members noted the report.

10. Reports from the Quality & Curriculum Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Quality & Curriculum Committee Meeting of 21 September 2020 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 21 September 2020. The Chair updated Members on the work of the committee at its last meeting. She advised members there would be a deep dive into High Needs, and a deep dive into English & maths at Langley College, to this committee at its future meetings.

i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

There were no recommendations to make to the Board for approval.

b. Student Achievement Report – Results Summer 2020

The Group Principal informed Members of the latest indications of student performance for summer 2020. Members were asked to consider the areas of student performance that might be at risk of performing below expectation, and challenge and advise how they feel this can be mitigated and interventions put in place.

The main areas of consideration for the Committee were achievements against College targets and 2019 performance by department. Members noted the report provided data on actual achievements and retention, but also indicated possible achievement from pending results. The Group Principal advised members that due to extraordinary circumstances this year, there would be no external reporting of national data and no external benchmarks but data for internal reporting would be used to set targets and actions for 2020/21. Members were also advised that a number of courses, particularly at Langley, had results which were pending due to awarding bodies not completing onsite assessments and these were due in October 2020. It was noted English & maths achievement at Langley was an area of focus for this academic year and curriculum review meetings had taken place with Heads of Department. All departments had been through curriculum planning meetings and budget meetings for this year.

The report was noted.

11. Reports from the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee Meeting of 30 September 2020 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the minutes of the meeting of 30 September 2020 would be on the Board agenda in December. The Chair of the Committee outlined the work of the Committee at its last meeting.

ii. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

The recommendations from the minutes were:

- Members were asked to agree an increase in the membership of both the Resources Committee & the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee, to seven Members.
All Members were agreed.

Rob Lewis left the meeting.

- Members were asked to agree to recommend to the Board that Rob Lewis be offered another full term of office
All Members were agreed.

Rob Lewis joined the meeting.

Angela Wellings left the meeting.

- Members were asked to agree to recommend to the Board that Angela Wellings be offered another term of office but not for the full term. The period recommended by the S&G&S committee was 3 years.
Members noted the real scrutiny by the committee in making this recommendation and the clear benefits to the Board at this time with the current pandemic, the current Chair leaving next year, and the appointment of a new CEO from April 2021. The Chair of the committee confirmed to members that there had been a lengthy debate at the committee around this proposal and it was considered an exceptional case as Angela would have completed two terms of office next year.

Members were mindful of the Code of Good Governance, and the OfS stance on additional terms, but felt this was an exceptional case that would benefit the Board for an additional period and had been subject to real scrutiny.

Members unanimously agreed to a further term of office of 3 years, for Angela Wellings and agreed this was an exception to their usual two terms of office policy and made for the right reasons.

Angela Wellings joined the meeting.

- Members agreed the recommendation from the Committee to the Board to hold the election, for the next Chair of the Board from July 2021, before the end of this academic year as opposed to it taking place just before the end of the academic year. The Clerk advised Members that she had discussed the issue of deviating from the I&A on this occasion, with Eversheds. As it was a move for pragmatic and practical reasons

Clerk

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

and intended to be a one-off deviation, that did not require a change to the I&A but a clear note of the reason it was done and that it was a one off.

It was considered sensible to know and appoint the Chair Elect from July 2021, for a number of reasons. These were good handover and succession planning as both the current Chair and current CEO would be leaving in 2021.

Members were advised that the term of the office of Chair did not need to be just one year but could be for a longer, say a two or three year term. The term was not set in the I&A but a matter for the Board.

All Members were agreed

b. 2019/20 Year-End Attendance Report

This item was presented by the Clerk. Members noted that the Board had achieved 85% attendance, against a target of 75%. The current pandemic had not seen a reduction in members being available to attend Committee and Board meetings.

12. Governance

a. Corporation Business

The Clerk presented her report on board and committee membership, and induction and development days.

The report was noted.

b. Approval of Application of Seal

There was no use of the Seal to report.

The report was noted

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

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

14. Evaluation of Meeting

Members were pleased to complete an evaluation of the meeting, highlighting where they felt they had added value and made appropriate challenge.

15. Dates and Times of Future Meetings and Events

The dates and times of future meetings were noted.

Scheduled for 6.00pm at Langley College on: Wednesday, 9 December 2020
Wednesday, 10 March 2021
Wednesday, 19 May 2021
Wednesday, 7 July 2021

Governance Development Day, 9.30am-12.30pm on: Friday, 13 November 2020
Friday, 16 January 2021
Friday, 7 May 2021

Governor Induction Session at 5.00pm on: Wednesday 9 December 2020

16. Any Urgent Business

There was no urgent business raised.

The meeting ended at 7pm.

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING BY MEMBERS

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

- Length of the meeting was about right

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

EXTRA VALUE

There was good interaction at this meeting on key items, for example the annual strategic action plan and consideration of an exceptional additional (not full) term for a current Member who had already completed two terms.

Risk Management – good input on how self-isolating students are being involved.

CHALLENGE

Item 4 – good questions and challenge on the safeguarding update.

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