



# 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, 6 OCTOBER 2021

		<u>Meetings Attendance</u>
PRESENT:	Angela Wellings (Chair)	(1 out of 1)
	Gillian May (Group Principal & Chief Executive)	(1 out of 1)
	Peter Tyndale	(1 out of 1)
	Anthony Haines	(1 out of 1)
	Stuart Taylor	(1 out of 1)
	Tina Coates	(1 out of 1)
	Rob Lewis	(1 out of 1)
	Nathan Garat	(1 out of 1)
	Sam Foley	(1 out of 1)
	Natalie Viola	(1 out of 1)
	Alison Wheatley	(1 out of 1)
	Iqra Abbas	(1 out of 1)
	George Shewell	(1 out of 1)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Graham Try (Deputy CEO)	
	Amanda Down (Principal, Sixth Form)	
	Ellie Wheeler (Director of Safeguarding & Pastoral Care)	
	Juliet Holloway (Group Vice Principal, Business Development)	
CLERK:	Lynn Payne	(1 out of 1)

### PART I

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	<b>The meeting started at 5.15pm</b>	
1.	<u>Health &amp; Safety Housekeeping</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies had been received from Mobolaji Alabi, Kiran Virdee, Tom Wainwright, Paul Britton and Student Governor Jake Smith.	
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> Sam Foley declared an interest in relation to matters related to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). She advised Members that for Part I and Part II meetings of the Board ongoing, she would like to register this interest. <i>This would be noted for all meetings going forward.</i>	
4.	<u>Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 7 July 2021</u> The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 July 2021, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature was applied. <b>All Members were agreed.</b>	
5.	<u>Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 7 July 2021</u> It was noted that there were no matters arising.	

MINUTE

NO.

ACTION

6.

Group Principal's Update Report

The Group Principal advised Members that the Colleges in the Group had returned to face to face teaching, from the beginning of the new academic year.

In relation to Covid-19 plans, she informed members that plans were well developed and the Colleges were ready to revert to online, or partial online teaching, should it be required. She informed Members that staff and students were repeatedly reminded of the importance of undertaking two lateral flow tests a week.

Members were advised of the current 16-19 enrolment figures for the three Colleges compared with those at this time last year. The increase in enrolments at both Strode's and Windsor Colleges was noted. The most significant change related to a decline of 77 students, which were attributed to Langley College. The course areas of decline were noted.

The Group Principal advised Members that part of the decline in numbers related to students in those course areas, now going into direct employment in their chosen areas arising from labour market shortages.

Members also noted the increase in applications and enrolments to all three Colleges from the core feeder schools.

In relation to the curriculum, the Group Principal informed Members there were still staffing challenges in a number of key curriculum areas, in particular in the areas of Electrical and Carpentry at Langley College.

Members noted the commercial and partner activity report, in particular, it was noted that the Greater London Authority (GLA) delivery plan project, the bid for which was submitted in May 2021, looked hopeful. In relation to the GLA, the College would make a bid for some funding, mainly from the Skills Funding Agency. Information had been received advising the return was indicatively accepted, but needed approval by the GLA. The final outcome would be known in December and the amount involved was noted as £164,000. By contrast, the Future Skills Hub in Slough looked unlikely to proceed. Members noted the other commercial and partner activity.

**The report was noted.**

7.

Period 12 Management Accounts & Provisional Outturn for 2020/21

Members were asked to consider the College's forecast financial position for 2020/21. The Deputy CEO provided a summary of the Period 12 Management Accounts, including the forecast outturn for 2020/2021. He advised Members that the closing and preparation of the College's statutory accounts for 2020/21 were at an advanced stage and external auditors were due to carry out their two week financial statements audit from 18 October. The Deputy CEO advised members that whilst there was some closing of accounts work in progress to be completed, it wasn't anticipated that there would be a significant change to the detail reported in these Management Accounts. One issue outstanding related to the final decision awaited from the ESFA and GLA on the College's audit funding grant, which could improve the forecast year-end position.

Members noted the College's forecast year-end income and expenditure position reported at this time, which was for a deficit of £1.19 million, which was noted as £1.231 million lower than the £2.350 million approved deficit budget for the year. Members were advised that the reduction of £259,000 in the deficit, compared to the Period 10 Management Accounts of £117,000 in the central contingency provision and the remaining reduction in the deficit of £142,000 was due to various net variations in the final part of the year.

The Deputy CEO informed members that the most significant financial risk to the current and future year's budgets continued to be learner recruitment and its impact on funding body grant income and tuition fees, as they represented 97% of the College's income. He spoke about the Government's announcement that a threshold of 90% would apply for the adult non devolved ESFA provision for 2020/21. This was noted as much higher when compared with the 68% Government threshold level in 2019/20 and much higher than expected.

MINUTE  
NO.

ACTION

The Deputy CEO referred to the GLA announcement that a 90% threshold would apply to its allocation, but special business cases could be submitted by July 2021 to increase the tolerance. The Deputy CEO confirmed the College had submitted a full business case and had recently been advised that their return was indicatively accepted, subject to the receipt of the final funding claim and approval by the Mayor in November. If successful, it was estimated this would reduce the clawback by £164,000 to £84,000, and the overall College deficit would reduce accordingly.

Members were advised that the year-end cash forecast was £7.5 million. ESFA "Good" financial health was forecast for 2020/21. This was noted as higher than the "Requires Improvement" financial health forecast, that was in the budget. This was due to the significant improvement in the forecast operating deficit compared to the budget. The Chair invited Members to ask questions on the Management Accounts and there was an interactive discussion.

**Members noted the report.**

8. Strategic Plan

a. Risk Register 2020/21

The Group Principal presented the Risk Register. Members discussed the risks and their ratings, in detail. The Group Principal referred to cyber-attacks being on the increase for Colleges, which was a concern and being monitored. Members were reminded that all the risks on the Risk Register would be considered in detail, and termly, by the relevant Committee they were allocated to.

In relation to Risk 1, the risk of radicalisation and extremism and sexual exploitation on the campus, the Chair of the Audit Committee asked how the risk rating had stayed the same, if the controls were not working? The Group Principal explained the difficult challenge for the College in relation to this risk and how the College budget couldn't mitigate all the risks society presented.

Members discussed whether additional resource was needed in this area. The Chair of the Audit Committee asked the Group Principal to canvass other Colleges to see how they were dealing with this risk.

**Members noted the risk register.**

b. 16-18 Enrolment Update

Members were asked to note the current 16-18 enrolment numbers as discussed earlier in the agenda.

**The report was noted.**

9. Safeguarding Update

The Director of Safeguarding advised Members of the safeguarding work and cases arising over the year to date in 2021/22. Members were asked to note the College Group's safeguarding activity for the period to date, from 1 August 2021. The Director of Safeguarding reported on the policies, procedures and documents in place at the College to ensure safeguarding arrangements were robust and effective. She confirmed that additional arrangements and changes to existing safeguarding arrangements had been put in place over the first and second lockdowns of 2020/21 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. There was a report on the safeguarding register and the support for vulnerable students. The Director of Safeguarding advised Members that now the Colleges had reopened the regular monitoring of vulnerable students had returned to previous procedures.

**Members noted the report.**

10. Reports from the Quality & Curriculum Committee

a. Draft Minutes of the Quality & Curriculum Committee Meeting of 21 September 2021 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 21 September 2021. The Chair of the Committee updated Members on the work of the Committee this term.

**Group  
Principal**

MINUTE  
NO.

ACTION

i. To note the Minutes and make recommendations

It was noted that all recommendations would be considered as separate agenda items.

b. Student Achievement Report – Results Sumer 2021

The Group Principal informed Members of the latest indications of student performance for the academic year 2020/21 and informed Members of the areas of student performance that might be at risk of performing below expectation going forward. She advised Members that at this stage of the year the main areas of attention for the Committee were achievements against College targets and performance by department. Members noted the report included data on actual achievements and retention and also indicates possible achievement from pending results. It was noted that this year, due to extraordinary circumstances, there would be no external reporting of data and no external benchmarks for all GCSEs, A levels and BTECs. There would however be benchmark data for these areas, including Functional Skills, where external assessment was used to determine final grades.

**Members noted the report.**

c. Apprenticeship Update

The Group Vice Principal, Business Development updated Members on apprenticeships at the College. She informed members that the Covid pandemic had presented some particular challenges around the delivery of apprenticeships at the College, both in terms of apprenticeship recruitment and in terms of timely and overall achievement. She advised Members though, that emerging from the pandemic, the College was seeing a demand for Apprentices picking up in numbers and that an experienced and skilled team was now in place to accelerate the pace of improvement moving forward.

**The report was noted.**

d. Safeguarding Policy & Procedures 2021/22

Members noted the recommendation from the Quality & Curriculum Committee, recommending the Safeguarding Policy & Procedures 2021/22 be approved.

**All Members were agreed.**

11. Governance

a. Corporation Business

Members noted the Clerk's report, including dates for Governor training and induction. Members noted the dates of meetings scheduled to December 2022.

**The report was noted.**

b. Approval of Application of Seal

There was no report in relation to the use if the Corporation Seal.

**The report was noted.**

12. 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. Members had participated well in the items on the agenda, adding value and making appropriate challenge. Papers were considered sufficient to inform decisions.

13. Evaluation of Meeting

This was a long Part I meeting with lengthy discussions in key areas. Members felt the reports were sufficient to inform their decision making and that the reports were clear.

14. Dates and Times of Future Meetings and Events

The dates and times of future meetings were noted.

Scheduled for 5.15pm on: Wednesday, 15 December 2021  
Wednesday, 9 March 2022  
Wednesday, 18 May 2022  
Wednesday, 6 July 2022

MINUTE  
NO.

ACTION

Governance Development Day, 9.30am-12.30pm on: Friday, 12 November 2021  
Friday, 14 January 2022  
Friday, 6 May 2022

Governor Induction Session at 4.00pm on: Wednesday 15 December 2021

15.

Any Urgent Business

The Group Principal shared her letter from the interim CEO of the ESFA regarding requirements in relation to Governance professionals. Specifically, there was a new requirement in College funding agreements that any person who was selected by the Governing Body for appointment as the Governance Professional or Clerk must have a qualification relevant to the role or equivalent experience. It was noted there must be a report in the College annual report and accounts on activities undertaken over the year to develop the Governance professional.

**The report was noted.**

**The meeting ended at 6.45pm.**

***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.***