

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation of West Thames College  
Held on Tuesday 14 December 2021 via MS Teams**

**Members Present**    Mr S Wilcox (Chair)    Ms T Aust                      Ms L Weatherill  
                                  Mr A Luke                      Ms B Sandhu                      Mr J Bryant  
                                  Ms C Ajit Singh                      Mr B Armstrong                      Mr Z Haulkhory  
                                  Mr A Barke

**Also present**                      Mr J Allen                      Mr M Cooper    Mr M Michaelides  
                                  Ms Gajewska-Kopczyk                      Mr J Bolt (Associate Governor)

The meeting commenced at 18.00

**1. APOLOGIES & QUORACY**

An apology was received from Ms L. Gomes. The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declared interests against any agenda item.

**3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held 13 October 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting (Paper 1a).

The confidential minutes of the Corporation meeting held 13 October 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting (Paper 1b).

**4. SUMMARY ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING**

The 'Summary Action List' was received (Paper 2). The following updates were made available against each outstanding action point from previous meetings:

Ref & Date	Action	Review Update
5(vi) – 13/10/21	It was <b>AGREED</b> for the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee to review the draft of Goal 1 when available before being put to the December meeting of the Corporation for approval.	Agenda item
6(ii) – 13/10/21	S & BD Committee to oversee a review of the Corporation's approach to risk and risk management and outcomes of the review will be reported to the Corporation.	23/3/22
6(ii) - 13/10/21	Draft of the Strategic Plan 2021-2024 to be an agenda item at the December Corporation meeting.	Milestones: ➤ Draft 3 Year Plan to be presented to the Corporation - December 2021 ➤ Spring term Governors' Strategy meeting to review

		➤ Final draft to March 2022 Corporation meeting
9 – 13/10/21	Governors were reminded to conduct their visits during the spring term and that visits will be organised by the Principal's PA. Governors were asked to complete a brief report following their visit and to make this available to the Clerk. The Clerk will then make available a summary report on visits conducted for the March Corporation meeting.	23/3/22

## **MONITORING COLLEGE PERFORMANCE**

### **5. Monitoring College Performance (i) Data Dashboard Review**

The following key points were noted from the review of the Data Dashboard:

#### **Financial, Health & Safety and Human Resources:**

##### 2020/21

Based on an overall score of 240/300, the calculated ESFA financial health grade for the College at 31 July 2021 is Outstanding.

An Operating surplus of £446k was achieved as at 31 July 2021 compared with budgeted surplus of £150k and a surplus of £431k in 2019-20.

##### 2021/22

The projected overall score as at 31 July 2022 is 230/300, which would result in an ESFA financial health rating of 'Good'.

Recruitment to Study Programmes for 16-19 years stands at 1,614 students against the full-year student number allocation of 1,656. The College will continue efforts to maximise student recruitment with further courses planned to start in January and more ESOL enrolments expected across the rest of the year.

##### Health & Safety and Human Resources

It was noted there were no changes to the updates that were reported to the Finance, Resources & Capital Projects Committee that met on 24 November 2021 (Paper 13).

##### **Learning Walks & Deep Dives:**

The schedule of learning walks and deep dives was planned to start in the last week of September. However, this was paused due to the Ofsted inspection. Learning Walks resumed on Monday 22nd November and the last one this term took place on 10 December. In terms of outcomes, 83% of learning walks this term were assessed as 'Green' with 17% assessed at 'Amber'.

Deep Dives will commence in January with the aim to complete in March. The focus will be on those curriculum areas that were not subject to inspection.

**Achievement 2020/21 Outturn:**

The final position for 2020-21 was provided below (the numbers in brackets represents the achievement rates minus sub-contracted provision). It was confirmed the results are largely in line with predictions as previously reported to both the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee and to the Corporation.

<b>College Data</b>	<b>2020-21 Ach</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>National Rates (NR) 2018-19 (timely)</b>
<b>College Overall</b>	<b>89% (90%)</b>	92%	90%	85%	85.9%
<b>14-16</b>	<b>94%</b>	95%	95%	98%	N/A
<b>Study Programmes (16-18)</b>	<b>88%</b>	90%	86%	81%	83.1%
<b>Adults (19+)</b>	<b>90% (92%)</b>	93%	92%	88%	88.6%
<b>*Apprenticeships (timely)</b>	<b>12.5% (8 leavers)</b>	59.4%	48.7%	51.5%	59.9%
<b>HNS</b>	<b>94%</b>	97%	92%	94%	N/A

It was confirmed that there is no subcontractor provision in the current academic year.

From January predicted achievement rates for the current academic year will be made available on the data dashboard.

**Attendance:**

Currently, YTD attendance for all learners is 86.6% (86.4% for 16-19 programmes of study), compared with this year's target of 87% and last year's outturn of 87%

In the recent Ofsted inspection, Behaviour and Attitudes, a key judgement which includes attendance and punctuality, was graded 'Outstanding'. Ofsted said: "Learners understand well the importance of attending and being on time for lessons. As a result, learners' attendance on courses is consistently high across most of the college provision."

**(ii) Development Plan**

The Corporation received for review the Development Plan 2021/22 (Paper 3) that included Goal 1 that was subject to review by the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee meeting held 24 November 2021. It was noted Goal 1 replaces the previous Post Inspection Action Plan.

It was confirmed the Development Plan includes the three recommendations made by Ofsted following their recent inspection of the College.

The Development Plan was noted.

6. **Strategic matters including the review of the Executive Report**

(i) **Executive Report**

The Executive Report (Paper 4) provided updates on:

- Strategic Matters
- Financial
- Leadership & Management
- Achievement Rates 2020/21
- Partnerships
- Student news

Ofsted:

The report confirmed the final Ofsted inspection outcomes with confirmation received that the inspection report has been published on the Ofsted website. The final position was confirmed as follows:

- Overall Effectiveness – GOOD
- Quality of Education – GOOD
- Personal Development – GOOD
- Behaviour & Attitudes - OUTSTANDING
- Leadership & Management – GOOD
  
- Safeguarding – Effective
  
- Provision Types
  - Education Programmes for Young People (EPYP) – Programmes of Study - GOOD
  - Adults - GOOD
  - Apprenticeships - GOOD
  - High Needs Students (HNS) – GOOD

Covid:

The wearing of face masks is now required in all communal areas as per Government guidance.

Partnerships:

A new joint project has been agreed with Ambitious College (AaA), attracting a small amount of funding. This project is one of a small number of projects nationally where FE Colleges work in partnership with a specialist provider. The main focus of the project is to support SEND learners at both WTC and AaA.

The College is working in partnership with Tuffnells, an employer in the logistics sector. The programme will provide students with valuable training, interview experience and a significantly improved opportunity for employment in the Logistics sector, with progression to the Level 2 Apprenticeship Standard in Express Operative as the next step. Tuffnells is the first national company to offer this Apprenticeship.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Executive Report.

**(ii) Draft of the 3-Year Strategic Plan 2022-2025**

The Corporation received for review the draft of the draft of the 3-Year Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (Paper 5).

Governors were asked to consider whether the three sections in the draft plan were sufficient enough to 'tell the story' of WTC and the College's strategy with a 3 year time horizon. The three sections being:

- Section 1: - Introduction & Executive Summary
- Section 2: - Strategy Objectives
- Section 3: - Governance, Assumptions, KPIs and Risks

The aim is to develop a robust and realistic yet ambitious strategy building to an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating. The aim is to enhance the position of the college as a strong, sustainable, and ambitious college.

To develop the three year strategy, the following milestones and timelines were noted:

- Agree the structure of the document with Governors at the December Corporation
- Executive team, with input from Chair, to create drafts for each section
- Strategy development to be overseen by, and with input from, the Strategy and Business Development Committee who will meet in January to assess progress
- Governors to get the opportunity to 'Test and Validate' at the February Corporation Strategy Day (which will include a deep dive on strategic risk)
  - Groups will review each section and consider the following:
    - Is it ambitious enough?
    - What do we need to do in order to achieve it? i.e., do we have the resources etc.
    - Any risks of achieving it or missing it?
- Aim to have final version signed off in March Corporation

During discussions it was agreed to make more reference to the student experience by either being more explicit on the targets proposed in the plan or by having a separate section in the Plan on the student experience.

A discussion took place on the next stage and the process to be followed for finalising the strategic plan and it was noted that this would be the main focus of discussion at the strategy meeting scheduled for next February.

Following review, it was **RESOLVED** to agree the structure of the document as presented to the Corporation.

**NON-DELEGABLE DUTIES (ARTICLE 3.1) AND STATUTORY AND OR COMPLIANCE DUTIES**

**7. College Self Assessment Report 2020/21**

Following the SAR Validation meeting of the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee held 24 November 2021, the Corporation is asked to review and approve the College Self Assessment Report 2020/21 (Paper 6).

The following grade assessments were noted as proposed in the College SAR:

Overall effectiveness	Good
Quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good

The following key strength and areas for improvement from the College SAR were noted:

### **Key Strengths**

- An ambitious, relevant and well-planned curriculum which is highly inclusive, meeting the diverse needs of our students and the local community which we serve. This results in a very high proportion of our students successfully achieving all of their qualifications, including in the core skills of English and maths.
- Very high student achievement – 89% overall for 2020-21 (2018-19 National Rate is 86%). 16-18 achievement is 88% against a National Rate of 83% and for 19+, achievement is 90% against a National Rate of 89%.
- Teaching, learning and assessment is particularly strong in terms of planning for learning, progress and engendering positive behaviours and attitudes. Teachers plan and teach the curriculum effectively, using a range of highly effective strategies. As a result students develop skills and build their knowledge securely over time. Teachers set high expectations which students embrace and as a result, develop a repertoire of valuable skills (including advanced practical skills) which they can apply in further study and employment.
- Staff and students from a diverse catchment area (over 20 different languages are spoken by our students), benefit from a culture of safety, respect, hard work and enjoyment that permeates throughout the College. High expectations of students, integral to the 'Our College Expects' campaign, lead them to developing positive behaviours and conduct. This is reflected in their attendance, their study skills and the pride they take in their achievements. As a result of this our students enjoy their time at College and progress to further study or employment.
- Our well-designed curriculum provides our students with the opportunities to develop and discover their interests and talents in their chosen industry sector, working with a wide range of employers. This is coupled with a highly effective tutorial programme which enables our students to develop their wider skills including resilience, confidence, independence and their physical and mental health.

- Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing a high quality and inclusive education for all. Diligent leadership and management supported by rigorous governance, have driven forward continuous year on year improvements resulting in substantial progress in all areas. Challenging and ambitious targets have been set, with students' learning at their heart, resulting in a high-quality learning experience for our students.

### **Areas Requiring Improvement**

- Continued strategic focus on apprenticeships following the significant improvements made in 2019-20 to the quality of this provision. This area was significantly impacted by the pandemic with the majority of provision focused in the logistics sector linked to Heathrow. A high proportion of apprentices were furloughed and a number lost their roles during the pandemic. There were only 8 timely leavers in 2020-21 with a 13% achievement rate. COVID-19 has resulted in the need to broaden and reposition the College's apprenticeship offer. This will strongly align the provision to economic recovery growth areas and local skills needs whilst supporting sustained improvements in outcomes.
- Further improvements in the consistent use of aspirational target grades in all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, accompanied by targeted support for students and professional development for teachers.
- Opportunities to extend the curriculum and enable students to demonstrate their skills and talents in their chosen subject through participation in events, shows and competitions were limited.

Following the recommendation from the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the College Self Assessment Report 2020/21.

## **8. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE 2020/21**

The *'Review of Governance 2020/21'* was received (Paper 7). The Corporation has agreed to undertake an annual review of governance for the proceeding academic year, with the final review report to be published in the autumn term covering following the same timescale for the College's self assessment process.

The Corporation has agreed the following framework for the annual review of governance:

- To conduct a review of current performance against a number of governance good practice indicators outlined by the FE Commissioner (Published May 2019).
- Review of current performance against a number of agreed governance KPIs
- Skills analysis audit conducted on current governors
- Chair to hold one-to-one review meetings with each governor
- Each Governor to be asked to review the Chair's Performance by completing a questionnaire - completed questionnaires to be

evaluated by the Vice Chair and the evaluation to be made available to the Corporation

- External Review
- Succession planning
- Action planning arising from the Review.

The review for 2020/21 commenced in the summer term, starting with conducting one-to-one review meetings between each governor and the Chair, and then for each governor to conduct a review of the performance of the Chair. The outcomes from these two components of the review framework was made available to the July meeting of the Corporation.

The remaining components of the review framework were completed in the autumn term, including action planning to address any areas of development identified through each of the review components.

The key section of the review report was the 'Governance Action Plan 2021/22' with particular focus on succession planning for governors, the Chair, and the Clerk. The Governance & Search Committee is tasked for monitoring the implementation of the action plan.

It was agreed to receive a progress update at the next meeting on the succession arrangements for a new Chair to be in place from the start of the next academic year. The Chair invited any governor who has an interest in the role to make contact with him

Following the recommendation from the Governance & Search Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the 'Review of Governance 2020/21' and the judgement that governance is 'Good'.

## **9. Audit Committee Annual Report & Financial Statements Year-Ended 31 July 2021**

The Corporation received for approval the Annual Report 2020/21 from the Audit Committee that has to be considered before approval of the Financial Statements (Paper 8). The Annual Report from the Audit Committee confirmed the following annual opinion from the Committee for the attention of the Corporation and Accounting Officer (the Principal):

*The Audit Committee, through review of auditors' reports and discussion with auditors and college managers, has arrived at the opinion that West Thames College has adequate and effective assurance frameworks, framework of governance, risk management and control processes for the effective use of resources, solvency of the institution and the safeguarding of its assets.*

*The Committee is satisfied with the financial reporting of West Thames College and the performance of the internal and financial statement & regularity auditors.*

*The Audit Committee considers that the Corporation's responsibilities have been satisfactorily discharged and recommends this report to the Corporation.*



It was **RESOLVED** to note the annual opinion and to accept the Annual Report from the Audit Committee,

The Corporation received approval the Financial Statements Year Ended 31 July 2021 (Paper 9). It was reported the external auditors, Buzzacott, had completed the outstanding audit work. There was one further adjustment required that related to capital expenditure accruals. It was confirmed this was a balance sheet adjustment with no impact on the operating result for the year. The adjustment will be reflected in the final version of Buzzacott's Post-audit Management Report and the Report & Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 July 2021 have been updated accordingly.

The accounts on page 25 showed a deficit for the year of £666k (2019-20: £341k). After stripping out FRS adjustments of £1,112k for pension service and interest costs the operating result for the year as reported at Line A of the I&E account in the Management Accounts (Paper 7) is a surplus of £446k (2019-20: £431k).

The commentary in the Financial Statements confirms the Corporation believes that the College has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements

Following the recommendation from the Audit Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2021; and to authorise the Chair and Principal to sign the Report and Financial Statements on behalf of the Corporation.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTING**

- 10. Report from the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee**  
The report and minutes from the Committee covering the meetings held 13 October 2021 (Paper 10), 19 November 2021 (Paper 11), and 24 November 2021 (Paper 12) were received and **NOTED**.
- 11. Report from the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee**  
The report and minutes from the Committee covering the meeting held 24 November 2021 (Paper 13) were received and **NOTED**.  
  
Received for information purposes was the '*Health & Safety Annual Report 2020/21*' (Paper 14) that was subject to review by the Committee.  
  
Also received for information purposes was the '*Human Resources Annual Report 2020/21*' (Paper 15) that was subject to review by the Committee.
- 12. Report from the Audit Committee**  
The report and minutes from the Committee covering the meeting held 01 December 2021 (Paper 16) were received and **NOTED**.
- 13. Report from the Governance & Search Committee**  
The report and minutes from the Committee covering the meeting held 24 November 2021 (Paper 17) were received and **NOTED**.

**14. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Two governors attended the recent meeting of the Student Parliament and spoke positively on how the students conducted themselves and the range of topics discussed during the session. The student governor in attendance thanked the two governors for attending.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 23 March 2022 @ 1800

**16. CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA ITEM**

Minutes for this agenda item recorded separately.

The meeting finished at 19.40.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ -

**SUMMARY ACTION LIST**

<b>Ref &amp; Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Review</b>
6(ii) – 13/10/21	S & BD Committee to oversee a review of the Corporation’s approach to risk and risk management and outcomes of the review will be reported to the Corporation.	23/3/22
6(ii) - 13/10/21	Strategic Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Spring term Governors’ Strategy meeting to review</li><li>➤ Final draft to July 2022 Corporation meeting</li></ul>	23/3/22
9 – 13/10/21	Governors were reminded to conduct their visits during the spring term and that visits will be organised by the Principal’s PA. Governors were asked to complete a brief report following their visit and to make this available to the Clerk. The Clerk will then make available a summary report on visits conducted for the March Corporation meeting.	23/3/22
8 – 14/12/21	To receive a progress update on the succession arrangements for a new Chair to be in place from the start of the next academic year	23/3/22
18 – 14/12/21 (confidential)	Barclays Bank Loan - new resolutions and Officers’ Certificate to be made available for the Corporation to review, agree, and authorise.	23/3/22