

**HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION  
CORPORATION MEETING**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14 July 2016**

Membership:	* P Taylor (Chair)	* J Bouffler	* L Laycock
	S Adamopoulos	J Breen	* L Jones
	* J Adams	* C Christofides	* M Prodger
	* N Allen	* M Coleman	* B Spencer
	* P Bartlett	* A Durcan	* K Spencer
	J Bedford	E Johnson	P Whitehead

\* denotes present

In attendance: M Stokes, Deputy Principal  
L Turner, Deputy Principal  
D Morgan, Director of Financial Services  
W Allanson, Executive Director – Business Development (agenda item 1942.1 only)  
D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation  
R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation

**1932 Apologies for absence and a welcome**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from S Adamopoulos, J Bedford, J Breen, E Johnson and P Whitehead.

**1933 Declarations of Interest**

N Allen declared in an interest in any agenda items / discussions concerning the UTC and informed the Corporation that he would withdraw from the meeting if the UTC is being discussed.

**1934 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Corporation approved the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2016 as a true and accurate record and they were signed by the Chair.

**1935 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

**1935.1 Management accounts for the period 1 August 2015 – 31 March 2016 (minute 1922 refers)**

Governors noted that in order to meet the bank covenants, the July 2016 management accounts need to be sent to the bank by the end of August 2016.

Governors also noted that the £342k gain relates to the car park.

**1935.2 Strategic Planning (minute 1924 refers)**

Governors noted that a manufacturing consultant from DMG Mori is now based in the College at least one day per week.

## **1936 Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation**

The Corporation considered the membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation and agreed the following recommendations of the Search and Governance Committee:

- To reappoint M Coleman as a Governor up until 19 October 2016 after which he will step down.
- To reappoint L Jones as a student governor for a period of one year.
- To appoint Terri Woodward as a higher education student governor for a period of one year.

Jon Bouffler was officially welcomed to Harlow College and the Corporation.

The Corporation thanked J Adams for his commitment to and enthusiasm for the role of student governor and wished him well for the future.

## **1937 Governor Training and Development**

M Prodger attended the Health and Safety Committee meeting.

L Jones reported back from the regional student governor conference he recently attended. The main themes were strategic area reviews, physical and mental wellbeing and the challenges faced by colleges in delivering English and maths.

P Bartlett attended the staff wellbeing day.

A Durcan reported on the ARU Medtech Innovation Centre meeting which looked at ways of how to connect with science. A Durcan also reported on his academy walk through with the vocational science team.

L Laycock attended the student awards evening.

N Allen reported on his academy walk through with the hospitality and travel team.

P Taylor held regular meetings with the Principal and Clerk.

## **1938 Principal's Report**

The Corporation received and considered the Principal's Report, presented by K Spencer, Principal.

The Principal presented the outline Strategic Plan to 2020 along with its overarching aims and objectives. She informed Governors that quality plans and KPIs will developed to sit underneath the plan and the College will produce an annual report in March / April 2017 once the DfE performance tables are released.

Governors agreed that the proposed strap-line fits with the current environment and it was agreed to add in that the values will be revisited and reinforced. Each value and associated underpinning themes were discussed in detail and the following points

were noted:

- Students at the heart
  - Improving employability skills.
  - Focus on digital skills.
  - Work-readiness programmes.
  - English and maths.
  - Develop independent, flexible and resilient students.
  - Curriculum to meet industry standards.
  - End-to-end support from before joining the College to after leaving the College.
- Be the best, be your future
  - High outcomes for learners.
  - Learners make significantly better progress at Harlow College than other institutions locally and nationally.
  - Human skills have replaced soft skills.
  - Student destinations are strong.
  - English and maths is seen as a barrier.
  - There is a commitment to investing in College staff.
  - Looking at how best to place ourselves with technical education and apprenticeships.
  - The College is starting to gain national recognition.
- Work hard, work together
  - There are a series of critical partnerships.
  - Looking to bridge the gap with advanced, higher and degree apprenticeships.
  - Strategic area reviews will require colleges to partner with other colleges.
  - The Advanced Manufacturing Centre will open in January 2017 and a technical partnership has been established with DMG-Mori, who will bring an employer base into the College.
  - The Statement of Intent has been signed for Stansted Airport and the land study is underway. Awaiting the outcome of the College's bid to the Local Growth Fund.
  - A Statement of Intent is being drawn up between the College and Princess Alexandra Hospital.
  - The College is waiting to hear from Public Health England on their work-readiness and apprenticeship programmes.
  - Adult work continues to be a priority for the College.
  - The College recognises the support received from the LEP, Essex County Council, Harlow Council and the bank.
- Be innovative and enterprising
  - The College is constantly looking at ways to be innovative and enterprising.
  - The College is undertaking some low risk international work with China.

A further detailed discussion was held and Governors raised the following points:

- Whether 'human skills' was the right word to use. **It was agreed a replacement word would be found.**
- The relationship of the College with Europe and the potential Brexit impact. K Spencer reported it is difficult to say at present and therefore it is not explicit in this document. **It was agreed to add in to "secure future in a global world".**
- There is no mention of support for learners in Be Your Best. **It was agreed to add in safeguarding, wellbeing and health and safety to the support section.**
- The College's excellent value added should be publicised as widely as possible. This will be part of the annual report. Wording around value added needs to be carefully considered and it was suggested that student governors could be involved in this. The following wording was suggested **"from their given starting points, students at Harlow College make good to outstanding progress and achieve better than going to another school or college".**
- High quality education is a critical factor with a number of large companies relocating to Harlow. The Harlow Strategic Education Partnership is compiling information on what Harlow can offer educationally.
- Statistics regarding happiness and prosperity should also be publicised.

The Corporation approved the outline Strategic Plan, titled Vision 2020.

### **1939 Management Accounts for the Period 1 August 2015 – 31 May 2016**

The Corporation received and considered the management accounts for the period 1 August 2015 – 31 May 2016, presented by M Stokes, Deputy Principal.

The management accounts were discussed in detail, Governors were given the opportunity to ask questions and the following points were noted / raised:

- Management accounts are reviewed regularly and reported on a monthly basis. The forecasts are also adjusted monthly.
- The consolidated operating surplus is £347k against an original budget of £300k. Both banking covenants are being met.
- Both pay and non-pay costs have decreased as income has decreased.
- The forecast reduction in income is £767k and there has been a £810k reduction in spending.
- Capital expenditure is not fully spent partly due to phased capital grants.
- P Bartlett highlighted that in real terms there has been a reduction in income and Governors discussed this.
- P Bartlett also highlighted the staff costs and asked if there was a recruitment lag. D Morgan confirmed that posts were not being recruited to immediately after staff leave in a number of cases. K Spencer confirmed that the recruitment lag is unknown until the payroll costs are confirmed.
- P Bartlett commented that the constant reforecasting undertaken by the College is a real strength and the internal auditors have confirmed that not many colleges do this.

The Corporation noted the report on the management accounts for the period 1 August 2015 to 31 May 2016.

### **1940 Two Year Financial Forecast 2016-18 and the 2016-17 Budget**

The Corporation received and considered the two year financial forecast 2016-18 and the 2016-17 budget, presented by M Stokes, Deputy Principal.

M Stokes highlighted the following points about the assumptions made in the forecast:

- The figures in the forecast include the predicted outturn for this year, what the College believes will be allocated next year and a best guess for the following year.
- The College's financial health rating is forecast to be good.
- In 2016 the College was funded for 2,517 full-time learners however the actual number of learners was 2,424. It is estimated that in 2016/17, the College will have 2,530 but will only be funded for 2,424 and in 2017/18 learner numbers are estimated at 2,580.
- The forecast needs to be sent to the SFA by 31 July 2016.

Governors were informed that they must approve a forecast and budget for 2016/17 and they need to be assured that the assumptions made are realistic. Governors discussed the documents in detail and asked questions.

J Adams asked if European project funding had been included in the forecast and budget. K Spencer confirmed that the figures did not include any European funding. The forecast and budget for this project work last year differed partly due to the funding not being released. It has now been released and the College is in the process of tendering for the contracts.

P Bartlett asked if the HE income target is realistic due to the current issues of recruitment. M Stokes confirmed that the College is growing its HNC and HND numbers. The final HE position for this year is £1.55m and the target for next year has been set at £1.6m.

M Prodger noted a significant increase in the National Citizen Service contract and asked if it has generated extra work. L Turner highlighted that the College manages the project and employs staff over the summer to deliver the NCS programme. The College has a guaranteed contract value. K Spencer informed Governors that the programme is likely to continue as a longer term project. The College has a good reputation for delivering the contract and it is a good experience for young people.

P Taylor asked whether it was worth noting that some loans are finishing soon and this was agreed by K Spencer.

P Taylor asked if there would be a revaluation of the College's property this year and this was confirmed by D Morgan, who also confirmed that this has been taken into consideration in the financial plans. K Spencer highlighted that different models of valuation are being prepared for the auditors to review.

Governors noted the SFA checklist, which gave assurance on key areas that had been taken into consideration when producing the forecast and budget.

The Corporation approved the two year financial forecast 2016-18 and the budget for 2016-17 based on the information presented and the SFA checklist.

## **1941 Quality Improvement Plan**

The Corporation received and considered the report on the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), presented by L Turner, Deputy Principal.

Two dashboards were circulated to Governors and Governors noted that the final QIP will be updated once the outcomes from the summer are known. Governors were updated on the following key areas within the QIP:

- Apprenticeships:
  - 415 apprentices are currently in learning, with 210 having completed.
  - The timely success rate is 64% against a target of 65%.
  - Timely success is defined as those finishing within their planned programme. The College offers a roll on, roll off programme.
  - P Taylor reported that 64% seems low, however it was confirmed that this is not low compared to the national figure.
  - L Turner reported on the issues impacting on this success rate.
  - Some frameworks are last for 42 months and are particularly challenging.
  - P Bartlett asked what Ofsted had reported about apprenticeships. L Turner confirmed that employers are not well educated about Prevent and that Prevent is not revisited by apprentices.
  
- English and Maths:
  - The predicted success rates for GCSEs are 26% for English and 30% for maths. This is below the College's target of 50% which the College was advised by Ofsted to set.
  - Functional skills predicted success rates of 80% for maths and 78% for English.
  - There is a national challenge with Level 2 functional skills reading exams.
  - The College is realigning its delivery model for maths and English with A-Level and GCSE staff teams being amalgamated. It is envisaged that this approach will help to raise standards.
  
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment:
  - The overall staff observation grade of good or outstanding has risen to 89%.
  - A three-month coaching programme for staff with two 'requires improvement' observation grades has been introduced.
  - There is a four week programme for staff dropping into the 'requires improvement' category.
  - Spelling, punctuation and grammar was a key focus at a recent staff development day.
  - Walk-throughs have shown significant improvement in teaching, learning and assessment.
  
- Work Experience and Destinations:
  - 46% of students due to complete this year have completed a formal period of work experience, which is below the College's target.
  - 48% of students not leaving College this year have completed their work experience.
  - A range of other work-readiness activities have been delivered but these do not count towards work experience.
  - The social action element of the NCS programme can be used as work experience next year.
  
- Curriculum:
  - The College's HE provision was gone through an internal review process with ARU and the College has been reapproved to deliver HE for ARU for a further

- two years.
- Strategic discussions are taking place with ARU regarding the College's HE provision.
- HE teams have been aligned with FE teams in order to increase internal HE progression.
- E-Strategy and Effectiveness:
  - This has been a big area of focus for the College.
  - I-pads for all full time FE students have been rolled out this year.
  - Investment has been made in the College's wi-fi infrastructure.
  - Three digital apprentices have been recruited who are developing new digital approaches to learning. The College also has a team of digital ambassadors.
  - A Digi-Fair was held to promote and share ideas.

Governors were given the opportunity to ask questions.

L Laycock asked if there was a correlation between the staff observation grades and the predicted GCSE results. L Tuner stated that those with a lower observation were not necessarily delivering GCSEs and K Spencer confirmed that English and maths is not observed separately, outside of the main observation process.

L Laycock also asked if staff would automatically be graded as 'requires improvement' if English and maths elements were not good or outstanding. L Turner reported that whilst English and maths is an important feature and is reported, it is not a limiting observation grade.

Governors questioned attendance and it was confirmed that Maths attendance for the year is currently 90% and English is currently 88%.

L Laycock asked what assurances the College could give Governors about the College's firewalls particularly in relation to Prevent. L Turner acknowledged that this is a challenge and the Principal agreed that use of technology would be on the Safeguarding Committee's agenda. K Spencer further highlighted that all use of technology is monitored by the College. There are restrictions on the College i-pads and there is a robust device management system in place. L Turner highlighted that official Prevent training is delivered to all members of staff and the Safeguarding Team undertakes a large amount of additional training.

Following on from the safeguarding discussion, the Corporation agreed that L Laycock and L Jones should join the Safeguarding Committee as Governor representatives in addition to M Prodger.

C Christofides highlighted the need to ensure that e-safety and appropriate firewalls are in place and that students are educated in appropriate behaviour. This would be beneficial to them also when they leave the College.

The Corporation noted the report on the Quality Improvement Plan.

## **1942 Harlow College Property Strategy**

### **1942.1 To receive an update on the AMEC Project**

The Corporation received a verbal update on the AMEC project, presented

by W Allanson, Executive Director – Business Development.

Governors were informed that the build is progress well and remains on budget and on schedule, with a target completion date on 23 December 2016. The College is negotiating a phased handover with Wilmott Dixon. CNC machines have been purchased and delivery is scheduled for the second week in December. The College is drawing up a long-term lease for the land where the electricity sub-station will be situated.

Wilmott Dixon has signed the contract. The College is waiting for one addendum and then the College will sign the contract.

There has been an issue with service diversions which cannot run inside the campus as originally planned. Additional costs may be incurred as the services will need to go further outside the College's boundary, however the College has been assured by the consultant team that Wilmott Dixon will be responsible for any additional cost. W Allanson reported that Wilmott Dixon are engaging well with College students.

The College has entered into a technical partnership with DMG Mori, with one of their sales consultants being based at the College one day a week. This will increase once the Centre opens. .

P Taylor asked about the funding profile and when the College will need to draw down on its loan. D Morgan confirmed that the College has not drawn down on the loan yet and it is hoped it would not be needed until at least August.

D Sheridan reminded Governors that the Corporation approved the bank loan in July 2015 and in October 2015 some amendments were considered. D Sheridan asked if the Corporation would agree that P Taylor, in his capacity as Chair of Governors, could sign any further bank documents in relation to the project on behalf of the Corporation. The Corporation unanimously agreed to this proposal.

The Corporation noted the update on the AMEC Project.

#### **1942.2 To receive the report and recommendations of the Principal with regards to the College campus**

The Principal reminded Governors of the proposed land swap with Harlow Council and confirmed that the College has agreed to lease land at The Hides and Broadfields. The College has expressed an interest in purchasing the land at The Hides over a period of time. The College will release its obligations with U-Park and that the cost to the College to lease the land is in line with what the College currently pays to U-Park.

#### **1943 Disaster Recovery and Management Plan**

The Corporation received and considered the Disaster Recovery and Management Plan, presented by M Stokes, Deputy Principal. Governors were informed that the plan is based on the AoC's model.



M Prodder asked whether the reference to car park 3 was still relevant. M Stokes confirmed it is valid until December 2016, however it will then be removed from the Plan. P Taylor suggested that there should be regular, planned testing on IT equipment, not just on installation.

The Corporation noted the Disaster Recovery and Management Plan.

## **1944 Financial Regulations**

The Corporation received and considered the updated financial regulations. Governors were informed that the financial regulations had been updated to be in-line with current EU regulations.

The Corporation approved the updated financial regulations.

## **1945 Governance Issues**

### **1945.1 Code of Good Governance for English Colleges**

The Corporation received and considered the report on the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

The Clerk highlighted that the Corporation had agreed to comply with the Code of Good Governance which sets out the values and expectations of the Board. The Code has been adopted on a 'comply or explain' basis and the Corporation will report in its annual accounts where it does not comply with the Code. The Search and Governance Committee had reviewed the mapping exercise of compliance with the Code.

The Corporation reviewed and approved the reporting of compliance with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.

### **1945.2 Dr David Collins, FE Commissioner**

The Corporation received and considered the presentation from the FE Commissioner on Strategic Area Reviews, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

The Clerk highlighted that the presentation gave details on the outcomes to date on Strategic Area Reviews. The presentation gives Governors an overview of what has happened in different areas. The Responsive Colleges Unit, commissioned by BIS, will produce a data pack for each college and a questionnaire will need to be completed by the College ready for the start of the process in November 2016. The College believes it is in a good position and discussions have already commenced between colleges across Essex and in parts of Hertfordshire.

The Corporation noted the presentation from the FE Commissioner on Strategic Area Reviews.

## **1946 Reports from Committees**

## **1946.1 Audit Committee – 21 June 2016**

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 21 June 2016.

### **1946.1.1 Internal Audit Strategy**

The Corporation received and considered the Internal Audit Strategy for 2016/17.

Governors asked if 43 audit days was a realistic figure. P Bartlett confirmed that the Audit Committee had taken advice from Scrutton Bland on the number of audit dates required and also highlighted that the governance audit is being moved to bi-annually rather than annually.

M Stokes highlighted that the sub-contracting assurance audit will be removed as this will be covered by external audit however additional internal audits will replace this one.

P Bartlett highlighted that the 3 Es – economy, efficiency and effectiveness – is covered in detail in each Audit.

The Corporation approved the Internal Audit Strategy for 2016-17.

### **1946.1.2 Review of the Risk Register and Risk Policy**

The Corporation received and considered the risk register and risk policy.

Governors noted the proposed change from red to amber of the following risk scores: likelihood 5, impact 2 and likelihood 2, impact 5.

The Corporation approved the risk register and risk policy, along with the revised classification of the risk scores as detailed above.

## **1946.2 Standards and Curriculum Committee – 24 June 2016**

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 24 June 2016.

## **1946.3 Resources Committee – 12 May 2016 and 30 June 2016**

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Resources Committee meetings held on 12 May 2016 and 30 June 2016.

K Spencer provided Governors with an update on the Sir Charles Kao UTC.

## **1946.4 Search and Governance Committee – 6 July 2016**

The Corporation noted that the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting will be presented at the Corporation meeting.

#### **1946.4 Standing Orders 2016-17**

The Corporation received and considered the standing orders for 2016-17 which have been reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee.

Governors were informed that there are no changes to the standing orders agreed for last academic year.

M Prodger highlighted that the Corporation is not achieving the 80% attendance rate at Corporation and Committee meetings.

The Corporation approved the standing orders for 2016-17.

#### **1947 Any Other Business**

There were no items of any other business.

#### **1948 Dates of Future Meetings**

Autumn Term	Wednesday 19 October 2016	08.30am – 4pm <i>(Corporation meeting followed by self-assessment reviews)</i>
	Thursday 08 December 2016	08.30am
Spring Term	Thursday 16 March 2017	08.30am
Summer Term	Thursday 18 May 2017	08.30am
	Thursday 13 July 2017	08.30am