

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the virtual meeting held at Harlow College on Thursday 14 December 2023 - 9am

Membership:	* Liz Laycock (Chair)	* John Godley	* Karen Spencer
	* Sonny Bazzoni	Mike Hardware	* Paul Taylor
	* Jon Bouffler	Stephen Isherwood	* Michael Travers
	* Rod Bristow	* Ray Levy	* Dawn Turner
	* Hannah Cheesman	* Lily Lin	* Ed Whittle
	* Julia Fillary		

* denotes present

In attendance: Will Allanson, Deputy Principal
Paul Whitehead, Vice-Principal
Becky Jones, Vice-Principal
Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance
Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal (agenda items 9 and 10 only)
Sally Appleby, Executive Director – HR Services (agenda items 9 and 10 only)
Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance

Annual Safeguarding Training

The meeting commenced with the annual Governor safeguarding training, presented by Marian Hollingsworth, Safeguarding Manager.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Michael Hardware and Stephen Isherwood due to work commitments.

2 Declaration of Interests

Michael Travers declared an interest in agenda item 11 – Health and Safety Reports as he is the College's Health, Safety and Estates Manager and contributed to the Health and Safety Annual Report.

Jon Bouffler declared that ARU are in the process of taking over Writtle University College.

There were no other new, additional declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes and the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 were approved by the Corporation as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising

4.1 Principal's Report – Local Strategic Improvement Fund Application (minute 5 refers)

Governors were informed that the College has been successful in its Stage 2 Local Skills Improvement Fund application, with the College acting as the lead partner for Greater Essex.

5 Strategic Planning

The Corporation received a verbal update on strategic planning, presented by Karen Spencer, Principal.

Governors were reminded that the College's Strategic Plan is due for review and that Corporations now have a duty to review their curriculum in the context on local, regional and national labour markets every three years or when a new Local Strategic Improvement Plan for the area is published.

Two events are being planned for the new year. The first event is with Chairs, Principals and Governance Professionals from across Essex which will focus on provision across Essex as a whole, aligned to the Local Strategic Improvement Partnership and the Local Skills Improvement Fund. The second event is for strategic planning for Harlow College and Stansted Airport College. Governors were reminded that initiatives such as HAMEC, STAC, the IoT, the Renewable Energy Centre and the Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Centre were a result of previous Strategic Plans and strategic planning events. The events will include input from external stakeholders and the internal event will include managers as well as Governors. A Governor requested that the guest speakers are tailored to focus on what can realistically be achieved in the next ten years.

Governors were informed that the College has secured funding from Essex County Council for the feasibility work for Phase 2 at STAC.

The Corporation was informed that a draft updated Strategic Plan will be presented to the Corporation at its meeting on 28 March 2024, along with the review of how the College's curriculum is meeting local needs.

6 Quality and Curriculum Reports

6.1 Minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee Meeting – 28 November 2023

6.1.1 To note the minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 28 November 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 28 November 2023.

6.1.2 To note the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2022-2023.

Governors were informed that KPI 2.2 has had its RAG rating changed from yellow to red at the request of the Standards and Curriculum Committee and that updated benchmarks have been included in the KPIs.

The Corporation noted the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2022-2023.

6.2 Item 1 - Self-Assessment 2022-2023, including performance for 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2022-2023, including performance for 2022-2023, presented by Karen Spencer, Principal and Becky Jones, Vice-Principal.

Karen Spencer informed the Corporation that the Strategic Summary on pages 5 – 11 of the SAR gives a summary position of the College, with strengths, areas for development and feedback from students. The section “What is it like to be a learner at Harlow College?” was informed by the Student Governors at the self-assessment event held on 28 November 2023.

Governors noted that it is increasingly difficult to assess the College’s position due to the void in data from Government, changes to the curriculum, changes to examined assessments and the return to pre-Covid grade boundaries. The College’s KPIs for 2022-2023 were set without knowing about the return to pre-Covid grade boundaries. The College’s KPIs were set to have a trajectory of improvement and were not based on grade deflation, therefore some of the KPIs have not been achieved. A Governor had suggested at the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 28 November 2023 that the College’s KPIs should have a longer-term trajectory with shorter milestones in between which would allow the College to be more measured in its approach.

Becky Jones reported that overwhelmingly vocational data has stabilised, with the College performing equally as well this year as in the previous year. T-Levels have also performed very well however T-Levels are excluded from the 2022-2023 data and benchmarks. Governors were informed that A-Levels and English and maths have had a negative effect on the College’s overall rates. The College had previously moved away from the AS and A2 system for A-Levels however has now moved back to this. This will help the College’s position going forward. The changes in the grade boundaries have also affected the College’s rates overall. There are small pockets of provision where improvements need to be made however management are aware of this and are addressing the issues in these teams.

Governors noted that the College’s vocational provision is positive and that all teaching, learning and assessment data has improved, Student feedback is positive and improvements have been made in apprenticeships and English and maths.

Karen Spencer reported on the main issue with English and maths. A number of institutions will enter all their students in the November resits and if they get a grade 1, they count in the data. The College has chosen to put some of its students onto English Functional Skills and this has deflated the College's overall rates as Functional Skills is a straight pass or fail.

Karen Spencer reported that the main issues are related to small pockets of vocational provision, A-Levels and English and maths. A Governor asked if these areas were small in terms of learner numbers. Karen Spencer reported that the vocational areas were a specific cohort of learners and that the issue with A-Levels is that each student is counted three times therefore the data is disproportionately affected. This is the same issue with ESOL learners.

Governors were informed that attendance was the fundamental issue for English and maths, however a significant sustained improvement has been seen this term, with English attendance currently sitting at 75% and maths at 78%. Non-attendance has been isolated to a core group of approximately 40 students. Individual assessments and interviews are taking place with these students to identify barriers to attendance and where appropriate, bespoke programmes are being offered to these individuals. The College is getting better at ascertaining the reasons for non-attendance, led by, and thanks to, an Assistant Principal and Head of Academy.

Governors were informed that there is a significant overlap between learners on free school meals, bursary and looked after children and not achieving English and maths. There is a deprivation element to this which is recognised nationally.

Paul Whitehead reported that the number of 16 – 18 and adult ESOL learners enrolled at the College is growing and learners being moved out of the area with little notice is an issue for the College which the College has no control over. In 2022-2023, the number of ESOL enrolments doubled, with approximately 200 learners equating to 700 – 800 enrolments. This is a significant proportion of the College's overall enrolment numbers and has a negative impact on the College's retention and achievement rates when they are moved out of the area. Data on withdrawal reasons for these learners is improving however more scrutiny is required.

A Governor highlighted the need for the ESOL data to better highlight the withdrawal reasons. The College cannot influence national decisions however it needs to record the reasons and defend its position. It is important context to have. Karen Spencer reported that the majority of the College's ESOL learners are being moved to Wethersfield or Tilbury and as far as the College is aware, no training is being offered there. A Governor asked if training is looking to be set up there however this is not yet known but hopefully the College can follow this up. Paul Whitehead reported that the College's Director of Supported Education sits on a number of national groups and is well-informed with the issues faced nationally, which match those experienced by the College. The College is looking to see if there is something it can do to help these learners continue with their education and gain some form of qualification. For ESOL learners who are retained by the College, they report their experience is very good and there is good progression for these learners. A Governor reported

that it is clear that the outcomes for these learners would be very different if it were not for the national policy and the Corporation agreed that the Director of Supported Education should be invited to attend the Standards and Curriculum Committee meetings.

Governors were informed that the target minimum grade (TMG) set for learners is not actually a minimum grade. It is a grade that would set the learner in the top quartile nationally. This is a national system which the College needs to work with. Currently the College is below the top quartile however the College is focused at aiming more for being above the working grade with more stretch for learners.

A Governor highlighted that the issue with the TMG is that the gap will widen between the top quartile and the rest of the cohort. Karen Spencer reported that this is a similar issue to that of grammar schools, as they have a disproportionate amount of higher performing students and the value added is not contextualised.

A detailed discussion was held around the self-assessment judgements within the SAR. A Governor highlighted that at the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting, the College acknowledged its disappointment in the outcomes and the need to focus back on the basics. The question was raised as to whether “good” was the right judgement and if an Ofsted inspector would reach the same judgements. In addition, a Governor asked if specific factors were stripped out, would the rates change and what are the top two or three things beyond quality of internal input.

Karen Spencer reported that the Corporation could decide not to include judgements in the SAR as it is not just as simple as making a one-word judgement under each category.

Karen Spencer reiterated that the main issues the College faced in 2022-2023 were attendance at English and maths, sitting English and maths exams, A-Level achievement and ESOL retention. These were isolated issues and actions have already been taken to address the issues therefore the provision has been graded as good. The issue with ESOL retention is completely out of the College’s control. For English and maths, those who achieve a grade 2 or Functional Skills are out-performing the national rates however the College has an issue with those with grade 1 and 2 not attending the exams.

Becky Jones reported that management is good at identifying issues, analysing the data and taking action to address the issues. Management is reactive and take swift action where required. The deep dives undertaken demonstrate that the student experience is strong.

A Governor reported that their biggest concern is English, that issues have been identified and plans put in place however the rates have declined. Becky Jones reported that a decision has been made that students with a grade 3 would undertake GCSE English and those below grade 3 would undertake Functional Skills. If this was included in the rates, achievement would increase.

Paul Whitehead reported that the five-year trends at a top level is showing a declining graph and this is disappointing however there are reasons for this and that the senior team have been open, honest and clear on the issues with Governors.

A Governor asked if the majority of the College's learners do not sit in the three isolated groups where the issues are and the impact of the downward trend is for a small minority of the College's learners. Paul Whitehead confirmed that this was the case. Outcomes for English and maths have declined however this is partly because of the College's strategy. The retention has improved however outcomes have declined. If the College or Corporation's decision is to improve outcomes at all costs, the question would be is this best for the learners. The College's strategy is always to do what is best for the learner. A Governor suggested that it would be a good idea to explain these issues and whilst there is always a focus on outcomes, the College will not play the system to its advantage.

Will Allanson reported that the College would have discussions with Ofsted inspectors to look at proportionality where issues are identified. If these identified areas were stripped out, the College's success would be clearly shown and seen.

A Governor highlighted that there was still some concern that the College was "treading water" with English. Paul Whitehead reported that English is being isolated however it is part of a bigger picture. Issues have been identified and achievement at Functional Skills Level 2 English moves the English achievement rates closer to the maths achievement rates.

Governors concluded they would be more comfortable if the rationale for the judgements was more clearly articulated in the SAR.

The Student Governors asked if the SAR matched their experiences at College. A Student Governor reported that everything in the document was, in their opinion, 100% accurate. The College really does focus on not just courses, careers and that enrichment and ambassador opportunities are great. Staff not only help students on their courses, but help them achieve their potential all round. Attendance is an issue with particular groups of students however it is not seen as a big issue as the College actively tackles this, with students being dealt with and spoken to. A Student Governor agreed with this and confirmed that issues are identified and action taken.

Becky Jones reported that when the data is looked at team by team, the majority of the College's provision is strong. This is included in the data tables appendix to the SAR.

Will Allanson reported that the key areas for development identified in the SAR have been expanded on and formed the basis of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

A further discussion was held around whether or not to make one-word judgements in the SAR.

Paul Whitehead reported that the judgements in the SAR are judgements Ofsted will make and it is important that the College and Corporation know where it is at in respect to these judgements. A Governor asked to what extent Ofsted will allow the College to demonstrate its position. Paul Whitehead reported it should be a constructive conversation, with inspectors looking to triangulate the judgements, with consistency of view being key.

The Corporation agreed that the judgements should remain in the SAR, with some extra narrative and rationale added in to support each judgement, articulating what is good and what the issues are. The Corporation agreed that the SAR is a great document highlighting the good work that the College has done and that it is an accurate reflection of 2022-2023.

The Corporation:

- Approved the Self-Assessment 2022-2023, subject to extra narrative and rationale being added in to support each judgement.
- Delegated responsibility to the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Committee on behalf of the Corporation to:
 - Work with Karen Spencer and Becky Jones on the extra narrative and rationale required;
 - Confirm and approve the additional narrative and rationale and ratify the judgements.
- Approved for Becky Jones to submit the Self-Assessment Report 2022-2023 to Ofsted once the amendments have been made and agreed and approved by the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Committee on behalf of the Corporation.

6.3 Item 2 - Key Performance Indicators 2023-2024 and Quality Improvement Plan 2023-2024

The Corporation received and considered the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2023-2024 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2023-2024, presented by Becky Jones, Vice-Principal.

Becky Jones reported that the presented KPIs provide a three-year position going forward, with annual targets and take into account the new 2021-2022 benchmarks. A Governor reported that this format demonstrates that the targets should be achievable annually however the College and Corporation has more ambitious targets over a three-year period.

Paul Whitehead reported that the intention with the quality of education and resources KPIs is that progress against them would be captured on a monthly basis which will allow for trends to be monitored and issues articulated over time. It was agreed that the KPIs would be circulated to Governors on a monthly basis with the management accounts.

A Governor highlighted that the most challenging areas for the College is retention and attendance and that the College is looking for continuous improvement. A Governor asked what the one or two key things are that give Governors the confidence that improvements will be achieved.

Governors were informed that the SAR has formed the basis for the Quality Improvement Plan for 2023-2024 and that every KPI and every action from the SAR have been incorporated into the Quality Improvement Plan. Paul Whitehead reported that the actions required by the College form the basis of the Quality Improvement Plan which is an annual working document, considered by the Standards and Curriculum Committee each time it meets. This includes clearly reporting actions being taken to achieve the KPIs, whether they are above or below target.

The Corporation approved the Key Performance Indicators 2023-2024 as proposed, without amendment, and the Quality Improvement Plan 2023-2024, subject to the amendments outlined above.

7 Search and Governance Committee Reports

7.1 Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee Meeting – 21 November 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 21 November 2023.

Governors were informed that Jon Bouffler is retiring from ARU in March 2024 and this meeting will be his last Corporation meeting. The Corporation thanked Jon for his contributions to the College over the years and wished him well for this retirement. ARU is in the process of nominating a successor.

The Corporation congratulated ARU on achieving the Times Higher Education University of the Year.

The Corporation was informed that Rachel Miller from Stansted Airport Ltd resigned from the Corporation on 22 November 2023.

The Search and Governance Committee recommended the appointment of Kate Greer from Rainbow Services, as a Governor of Harlow College Further Education for a period of four years, commencing on 3 January 2024. It is recommended that Kate Greer be a member of the Search and Governance Committee.

The Search and Governance Committee recommended the appointment of Heather Wilson from Stansted Airport Ltd, as a Governor of Harlow College Further Education for a period of four years, commencing on 3 January 2024. It is recommended that Heather Wilson be a member of the Resources Committee.

The Corporation unanimously approved the Search and Governance Committee's recommendations and Kate Greer and Heather Wilson were

appointed as Governors of Harlow College Further Education for a period of four years, commencing on 3 January 2024.

The Corporation was informed that the Search and Governance Committee had agreed that Governor pen portraits should be added to the College's website. Ruth Lucas will co-ordinate this.

7.2 Item 1 – Self-Assessment of Governance 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the Self-Assessment of Governance 2022-2023, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Ruth Lucas gave Governors an overview of the document and the sections contained within it.

Governors were informed that the Self-Assessment of Governance had been considered in detail at the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 21 November 2023 and that the Committee recommends its approval to the Corporation.

The Corporation approved the Self-Assessment of Governance 2022-2023.

7.3 Item 2 – AoC Further Education Code of Good Governance

The Corporation received and considered the report of the AoC Further Education Code of Good Governance, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Governors were reminded that the Corporation adopted the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges in July 2015. The Code has been through a number of reviews and has become unwieldy, often duplicating information found in other sources.

In September 2023, the AoC published the Further Education Code of Good Governance, to replace the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges. The new Code is based on six fundamental principles. Corporations wanting to adopt the new Code need to do so by 2024-2025 and report on compliance in December 2025 at the latest. Corporations can adopt the Code earlier if they choose to do so.

The new Code was highlighted, along with a template for Corporations to complete to monitor compliance with the new Code.

The Corporation was informed that the Code was considered in detail by the Search and Governance Committee at its meeting held on 21 November 2023 and that the Committee recommends to the Corporation the adoption of the new Code from the beginning of the current academic year.

The Corporation approved the adoption of the AoC Further Education Code of Good Governance for Harlow College Further Education Corporation from the beginning of the 2023-2024 academic year onwards and the monitoring of

compliance with the AoC Further Education Code of Good Governance will be a responsibility of the Search and Governance Committee.

8 Audit, Finance and Resources Reports

8.1 Audit Committee Reports

8.1.1 Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting – 6 December 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 6 December 2022.

8.1.2 Item 1 - To receive and approve the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2023

The Corporation received and considered the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2023. Governors were informed that the report had been considered at the Audit Committee meeting held on 3 October 2023 and that there is nothing extraordinary to report.

The Corporation approved the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2023.

8.1.3 Item 2 - To receive and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee

The Corporation received and considered the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for the period 01 August 2022 to 31 July 2023, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Governors were informed that this annual report needs to be agreed by the Corporation and forms part of the statutory documents which need to be submitted to the Education Skills Funding Agency.

Ruth Lucas highlighted that the report summarises the work of the Audit Committee, how the Audit Committee has fulfilled its terms of reference and provides details of the assurances gained through internal and external audit.

Governors were informed that the report had been reviewed in detail by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 6 December 2023.

The Corporation noted and agreed the following opinion of the Audit Committee

“It is the opinion of the Audit Committee, based on the reports it has received and considered, and drawing upon the knowledge and expertise of its members and its audit services, supported by the work and views of College management, that during 2022-23 Harlow College:

- *had adequate and effective assurance arrangements;*
- *had an adequate and effective framework of governance;*
- *had adequate and effective risk management and control processes for the effective and efficient use of resources, solvency of the College and the safeguarding of its assets;*
- *had adequate arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness;*
- *had adequate and effective key internal controls;*
- *had adequate and effective arrangements for data quality;*
- *had, overall, systems and controls that are adequate and effective for carrying forward the objectives of the College.*

The Audit Committee met in private with the internal and external auditors on 6 December 2023 and no issues impacting upon matters of internal control were raised. Buzzacott did not identify any matters of material irregularity throughout their audit work to bring to the attention of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee considers that it operated effectively in 2022-2023 and that it met its terms of reference and the requirements of the Audit Code of Practice.”

The Corporation approved the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2022 – 2023 and agreed for it to be signed by Ray Levy, Chair of the Audit Committee.

8.1.4 Item 3 – To receive the recommendation of the Audit Committee on the appointment of the College’s external auditors

The Corporation received and considered the report on the appointment of the College’s external auditors, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that the Audit Committee recommends the reappointment of Buzzacott as the College’s external auditors for a further two years, subject to an annual review by the Audit Committee and management.

The Corporation unanimously agreed to appoint Buzzacott as the College’s external auditors for 2023/24 and 2024/25, subject to an annual review.

8.2 Joint Audit and Resources Committee Reports

8.2.1 Minutes of the joint Audit and Resources Committee Meeting – 6 December 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the joint Audit and Resources Committee meeting held on 6 December 2023.

8.2.2 Item 1 - To receive and approve the Post-Audit Management Report for the period to 31 July 2023 and the Letter of Representation

The Corporation received and considered the Post-Audit Management Report for the period to 31 July 2023 and the Letter of Representation, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that the Post-Audit Management Report was considered in detail by the joint Audit and Resources Committee at its meeting held on 6 December 2023 and by management.

Deanne Morgan informed the Corporation that the report is currently in draft as the College is awaiting the final ESFA funding report which is due imminently. Once this has been received and reviewed by Buzzacott, a statement will be added in to the Post-Audit Management Report and the report will be finalised. No issues are anticipated with this.

The Corporation reviewed the Letter of Representation and Governors noted that a standard template had been used.

The Corporation noted that both documents are submitted to the ESFA with the College's Financial Statements.

The Corporation approved the Post-Audit Management Report for the period to 31 July 2023 and the Letter of Representation for the year ended 31 July 2023 and agreed for the Letter of Representation to be signed by the Chair and Accounting Officer.

**8.2.3 Item 2 - To receive and approve the Operating and Financial Review 2022-2023
&
Item 3 - To receive and approve the Financial Statements 2022-2023**

The Corporation received and considered jointly the Operating and Financial Review 2022-2023 and the Financial Statements 2022-2023, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that both documents were considered in detail at the Joint Audit and Resources Committee meeting held on 6 December 2023.

Governors were informed that the final year-end position is a deficit of £86k and this is lower than previously expected, mainly due to the pension contributions and capital receipts.

Governors noted that the Financial Statements indicate that the College's financial health remains as good and both bank covenants are being met.

The Corporation recognised the amount of work undertaken by the Finance Team in order to prepare for audit and Paul Whitehead highlighted the complementary comments from the external auditors.

The Corporation approved the Operating and Financial Review 2022-2023 and the Financial Statements for 2022-2023 and agreed that they should be signed by the Chair and the Principal and sent to the Education Skills Funding Agency.

8.3 Resources Committee Reports

8.3.1 Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting – 6 December 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 6 December 2023.

8.3.2 Item 1 – ESFA Financial Health Rating Letter and Dashboard

The Corporation received and considered the ESFA financial health rating letter and dashboard.

Governors noted that the letter is a standard letter which is issued by the ESFA annually.

A Governor highlighted that the letter and dashboard always reflects the position the College and Corporation believed it was in therefore Governors have confidence in what they are being told by management both now and going forward.

The Corporation noted the ESFA financial health rating letter and the dashboard.

8.3.3 Item 2 - Management Accounts for the period 1 August 2023 – 31 October 2023

The Corporation received and considered the management accounts for the period 1 August 2023 – 31 October 2023, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that targets within the management accounts have been revised due to the additional funding allocations the College has received.

Governors noted that the year-end forecast is slightly below the current target. This is due mainly to the challenge the College has had in recruiting staff in certain areas. The College's spend on agency staff is reducing and the impact of this should be seen in future management accounts.

Paul Whitehead reported that the first 16-18 learner number return has been submitted to the ESFA. The College currently has an additional 143 learners than it is being funded for this academic year. The process for in-year growth has not yet been officially announced by the ESFA however if it is based on previous years, the College would expect to see in-year growth for 43 learners as the first 100 learners over allocation is not funded. No adjustments have been made at this time in the management accounts however Governors were informed that if in-year growth for 43 learners is realised, this would equate to approximately £250k. Governors noted that the College would receive funding for the full 143 learners in next year's allocation.

The Corporation approved the management accounts for the period 1 August 2023 – 31 October 2023.

9 Safeguarding Reports

9.1 Minutes of the Safeguarding Committee Meeting – 22 November 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Safeguarding Committee meeting held on 22 November 2023.

It was noted that Dawn Turner was there in person and it was agreed that the minutes would be amended accordingly.

9.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2022-2023, presented by Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Governors were informed that the number of ESOL learners continues to grow and there is a widening achievement gap, mainly due to these learners being moved out of area when they turn 18.

Governors noted that there is an achievement gap between bursary and non-bursary students however this is often due to socio-economic factors and this is seen nationally. The College is making teams more aware of the use of the team profile to help address this gap.

Governors were informed that there had been no Prevent referrals during 2022-2023 however there was a referral to the Cyber Choices team. The risk is high in the Eastern region and continues to be predominantly around far right-wing extremist views and lone self-initiated people. A Governor asked if the College's Prevent referrals are in line with other colleges. Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that the Counter-Terror team receive the largest number of referrals from educational institutions however cases need to meet a required threshold and evidence of this is required before reporting to the Channel Panel. A Governor asked if the College keeps details of the number of cases that the College has

that do not meet the threshold. It was agreed that this should be reported on at the Safeguarding Committee meetings. Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that the team is working on the refining the categories therefore some could be safeguarding rather than Prevent.

The number of stop and searches conducted has increased in 2022-2023 compared to 2021-2022.

The priorities for 2023-2024 were highlighted and Governors were informed that the College continues to meet its statutory obligations.

Governors noted that a DBS audit check was undertaken by DBS and the College passed straightaway.

A Governor highlighted that it was reassuring that the report triangulates with the information contained with the College's SAR 2022-2023 and the information given at the Governor safeguarding training at the beginning of this meeting.

A Governor asked about the figures in the graph for safeguarded and vulnerable learners and asked why the figures did not add up to 100%. Paul Whitehead confirmed that the figures are achievement rates therefore would not add up to 100% and it was agreed that the graph should have been labelled to reflect this.

The Corporation noted the Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2022-2023.

10 Equality and Diversity Reports

10.1 Minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee Meeting – 13 November 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee meeting held on 13 November 2023.

10.2 Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2022-2023 and Objectives

The Corporation received and considered the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2021-2022 and Objectives, presented by Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal and Sally Appleby, Executive Director – HR Services.

The report was taken as read.

Sally Appleby reported that there has been a focus on improving engagement with staff, based on the feedback received in the 2022 staff survey. In addition a termly HR newsletter is being produced, policies and procedures have been looked at and support groups on different themes have been established.

Governors were informed that the staffing profile is stable compared to last year. It was noted that 11% of staff are from an ethnic minority group, whereas

the local population is 15.5%. All other protected characteristics for the College are above benchmarks.

Work is being undertaken to drill down into the recruitment and protected characteristics data further to identify any trends.

The areas for improvement and focus for 2023-2024 were highlighted, including the 10-point plan from the Black Leadership Group and Investors in Diversity. The College will look at frameworks to establish what it could do and measure against going forward.

Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that for students there is a big focus on the achievement gap between white learners and those from an ethnic minority group. The gap is getting smaller however it is impacted by the number of ESOL learners the College has.

Governors were informed that the achievement gap between 16-18 year old females and males is reducing however there are specific areas which still need to be focused on.

Governors noted that high needs funded learners are performing strongly however the achievement gap is widening for those learners who require additional support but do not quite reach the threshold for high needs funding.

A Governor noted that there is a bigger gap for learners not disclosing an additional need. Paul Whitehead reported that the number of “unknowns” has reduced however the College is refining its processes to try to identify any additional needs at the interview stage. A Governor reported that interventions can be put in place from the start if it is declared at the earliest opportunity,

The Corporation approved the Equality and Diversity Annual Report and Objectives 2022-2023.

11 Health and Safety Reports

11.1 Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting – 23 November 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 23 November 2023.

11.2 Health and Safety Annual Report 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the Health and Safety Annual Report 2022-2023, presented by Will Allanson, Deputy Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Governors were informed that a new system, Smartlog, has been introduced to measure and improve compliance and that all data is being migrated to this system. A Governor asked what this compliance was in relation to. Michael Travers reported that it relates to improvements made since the previous year.

Governors' attention was brought to the 274 hazards and unsafe practices identified and that 212 of these have been closed off. It was agreed that the hazards should be risk rated in future reports with any that are high risks being highlighted.

A Governor asked about the increase in fire alarm activations. Will Allanson reported that this was mainly due to vaping on site setting the alarms off. An intense pattern had been noticed and CCTV has been put in place in key areas. The learners responsible have been identified and the number of activations is now decreasing. Will Allanson reported that the College is looking to explore whether there can be delay on individual alarms to examine the extent of the activation before evacuating the building.

A Governor asked what is covered in the category "other" in the breakdown of health and safety reports as this has increased from 3 in 2021-2022 to 12 in 2022-2023. Michael Travers reported that these are incidents that would not be considered as first aid incidents however due to their nature, a first aider was called and the incident was recorded.

The Corporation ratified the Health and Safety Annual Report 2022-2023.

12 Stansted Airport College Advisory Group – 01 November 2023

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Stansted Airport Advisory Group meeting held on 01 November 2023.

Will Allanson reported that the College has received funding from Essex County Council to undertake the feasibility study for STAC Phase 2, which will see the expansion of the College and an additional gift of land from Manchester Airport Group. A masterplan for the site was developed pre-Covid which includes the creation of a wider campus, incorporating Stansted Academy and the Aerozone. Phase 2 will focus on extending the provision and size of the College. Capital funding will need to be secured for the build however Essex County Council have indicated their intention to invest in the project. The College therefore needs to be ready to mobilise when funding is released.

A Governor asked about parking for STAC students and whether this would be included in Phase 2. Karen Spencer reported that there are planning constraints with parking which limit the ability to offer student parking on site. Will Allanson reported that more specialist bus services are now offered which the students can use.

13 Any Other Business

The Corporation was informed that Hannah Cheesman has been awarded a Jack Petchey Award and Hannah reported on her interviews with the BBC on the defunding of BTECs.

15 Dates of Future Meetings

Spring Term 2024	Thursday 28 March 2024	9am
Summer Term 2024	Wednesday 22 May 2024	9am

Thursday 11 July 2024

9am