

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Zoom – Thursday 15 December 2022 - 9.30am

Membership:	*Liz Laycock (Chair)	*Alex Hanson	*Brian Spencer
	*Jon Bouffler	*Stephen Isherwood	*Karen Spencer
	*Rod Bristow	*Eddie Johnson	*Paul Taylor
	*Hannah Cheesman	*Ray Levy	*Michael Travers
	*Julia Fillary	*Lily Lin	*Dawn Tuner
	*John Godley	Rachel Miller	*Ed Whittle

* denotes present

In attendance: Will Allanson, Deputy Principal
Paul Whitehead, Vice-Principal
Becky Jones, Vice-Principal
Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance
Shachi Blakemore, Buzzacott (agenda item 7.2 only)
Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal (agenda items 8 and 9 only)
Sally Appleby, Executive Director – HR Services (agenda items 9 only)
Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Rachel Miller due to work commitments.

Liz Laycock welcome John Godley, Stephen Isherwood and Ed Whittle to their first Corporation meeting and they introduced themselves.

Liz Laycock, on behalf of the Corporation and the College, thanked Eddie Johnson for his years of service and phenomenal contribution as a Governor at Harlow College. A goodbye lunch will be arranged for Eddie in the new year.

2 Declaration of Interests

Michael Travers declared an interest in agenda item 10 – Health and Safety Reports as he is the Health and Safety Manager and contributed to the Health and Safety Annual Report.

There were no other new, additional declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022 were approved by the Corporation as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed remotely by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising

4.1 Matters Arising – HMRC Guidance (minute 5.2 refers)

Governors were informed that the HMRC guidance has not yet been published however it is not an issue for the College as the College will charge a fee for charging electric vehicles but not a charge for parking.

4.2 Equality and Diversity Committee (minute 5.4 refers)

Governors were informed that Will Allanson and Ruth Lucas have met with Sallyann Abdelmoula to discuss the remit of the Committee and the format of the minutes.

4.3 Quality and Curriculum Update (minute 7 refers)

Ruth Lucas has circulated an acronym list to all Governors which also included key definitions of the terminology used.

4.4 Strategic Plan and How the College Meets Labour Market Skills' Needs (minute 10 refers)

Karen Spencer reported that full guidance on publishing an annual statement on meeting skills' needs due in autumn has not yet been received.

4.5 Any Other Business (minute 14 refers)

Ruth Lucas has circulated an acronym list to all Governors.

5 Written Resolution

The Corporation received and noted the written resolution which was dated 9 November 2022 and was signed remotely by the Chair after the meeting.

6 Quality and Curriculum Reports

6.1 Minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee Meeting – 23 November 2022

6.1.1 To note the minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 23 November 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 23 November 2022.

6.1.2 To note the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2021-2022

The Corporation received and considered the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2021-2022.

Governors were informed that predicted achievement should now be the final position and that there were some slight anomalies with how

the data is reported. It was confirmed that the final confirmed data is contained within the data tables in Agenda Item 6.2, Appendix 1.

The Corporation noted the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2021-2022.

6.2 Item 1 - Self-Assessment 2021-2022, including performance for 2021-2022

The Corporation received and considered the report on Self-Assessment 2021-2022, including performance for 2021-2022, presented by Karen Spencer, Principal and Becky Jones, Vice-Principal.

Karen Spencer informed the Corporation that individual elements of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) were discussed in the individual reports presented at the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 23 November 2022. These reports were scrutinised in detail by the Committee and Governors asked detailed questions. Since the Committee meeting, the individual reports have been incorporated to produce the overall College SAR, which also provides details of the College's overall strengths and areas for development.

Governors were informed that the strategic summary included in the SAR is taken from the Strategic Plan which was approved by the Corporation at its meeting on 20 October 2022.

Governors' attention was brought to pages 5 – 9 of the SAR as pages 10 – 62 were scrutinised in detail by the Standards and Curriculum Committee at the meeting held on 23 November 2022.

Governors noted that the College has self-assessed its overall effectiveness as good and good in all categories, with the exception of apprenticeships which has been assessed as requires improvement. Improvements have been made to apprenticeships and continue to be made. Governors were informed that apprenticeship achievement for this academic year to date is already at 36% which is in excess of 15% further forward than where the College was expecting to be at this point.

Governors were informed that students are overwhelming positive about their experiences at College. When discussions are held with students, they are able to articulate what they need to do and demonstrate that the College is making a difference to them. Alex Hanson, Student Governor, reported that he has had similar responses when he has been speaking with students. Karen Spencer reported that this is great to hear and that the College is trying to capture and act on what students are saying.

Governors' attention was brought to Section C of the SAR – Contribution to Meeting Skills Needs, which is a new Ofsted sub-judgement. Karen Spencer reported that this is a strength of the College and is reported as good in the SAR. The Ofsted judgments are strong, reasonable and limited and after a discussion the Corporation agreed that the judgment should be changed from good to strong in the SAR. A Governor highlighted that Harlow College has a unique way of working with employers and meeting skills' needs, for example, Stansted Airport College.

Governors were informed that the Executive Summary in the SAR covers walkthroughs and deep dives and that safeguarding has been judged to be effective.

Governors' attention was brought to what the College needs to do to improved.

Karen Spencer reported on a specific retention issue for a particular group of students which was discussed in detail at the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 23 November 2022. Becky Jones and Paul Whitehead are interrogating the data to fully understand what the issue is. Major contributing factors are ESOL learners being moved out of area and health issues. The College is ensuring the right levels of support are in place for these learners and a retention task force has been established. Becky Jones reported that some data analysis has already been undertaken and the identified issues are being worked through.

There is a need to continue to focus on the "improve cycle" and providing stretch and challenge to achieve higher grades and ensure all teachers understand value added and target grades.

There is a big focus on English and Maths attendance at lessons and exams.

The enrichment programme has been successful and there is now a focus on fully embedding this.

There is a need to ensure there is sustained improvements for apprentices and improved communication with employers around progress reviews.

Better support for adults with a focus on retention is required for those on long programmes and there is a need to sustain the improvements in the adult e-learning programmes.

A Governor reported that they believed the focus on adult learners and effective support for those on programme had not been sufficiently included in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and that apprenticeship progress and work with employers should be stronger in the QIP. Becky Jones will look at updating the QIP accordingly.

Hannah Cheesman, Student Governor, reported that the enrichment is being well received by students, with a lot of students involved and a good variety of activities being offered.

A Governor reported that the SAR was a very good report which was easy to read and reads well. Karen Spencer reported that this was good to hear and that individual staff members have taken responsibility for their own sections in the report.

A Governor reported that the SAR was an excellent report, which was well written and clear, with a focus on what the College does well in addition to being clear on what it needs to do to improve. The Governor praised everyone who contributed to the report.

A Governor highlighted that the English and Maths issue is not just attendance. They asked about the curriculum requirements and influence on government policy. They asked if there is anything the College can contribute to raising this issue. Karen Spencer reported that she co-chairs the Association of Colleges' (AoC) Maths and English Policy Group and is raising issues with the DfE however this is with limited success at present. There is a need for a proper review of English and Maths post-16 and the condition of funding. Karen Spencer is also working with the AoC on qualification reform. There are big gaps with the introduction of T-Levels and the removal of other Level 3 provision with T-Levels not being appropriate for a diverse range of students.

A Governor asked what the College's view is on the fall in higher education student numbers. Becky Jones reported that the College is revamping its Higher National offer in line with the Institute of Technology and T-Level provision, along with an adult evening part-time offer. It was agreed that these areas would be added into the QIP.

A Governor suggested adding into Section 19 that students are given an i-Pad, as this shows the College's commitment in terms of levelling up.

A Governor suggested adding into Section 23 the range of formal teaching qualifications at Levels 3 – 5 that the College offers to develop its staff.

The Corporation approved the Self-Assessment 2021-2022, subject to the amendments detailed above, and approved for Becky Jones to submit the Self-Assessment to Ofsted once the amendments have been made.

6.3 Item 2 - Key Performance Indicators 2022-2023 and Quality Improvement Plan 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2022-2023 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2022-2023, presented by Becky Jones, Vice-Principal.

Governors' attention was brought to the KPIs for 2022-2023.

A Governor highlighted that some measures show a present position and target and some do not. It was agreed that SMART targets would be added in for all KPIs.

Karen Spencer reported that the detailed KPIs for this year will be reported into the relevant Committees however a Governor dashboard will be produced with a view to provide a top-level overview and simplify the standards and quality KPIs. The KPIs will be measured on half termly basis, more frequently where appropriate, and will report into Governors through the appropriate Committees and the Corporation.

A Governor asked if the College is being ambitious with its targets and if they are achievable and Karen Spencer confirmed that this is the case.

Becky Jones reported that retention is the overarching theme across a number of programmes in the QIP and the College is identifying key actions to address this. There is a need to gather more intelligence on adults and more detail will be added into the QIP.

Other key themes in the QIP are the “improve cycle” linked to the setting of aspirational targets and English and Maths. The College is developing strategies to re-engage students and encouraging a growth mindset. More feedback is being given to students and formative assessment is taking place. More staff are being deployed this year with the view to reducing class sizes and providing more 1-2-1 support.

A Governor asked about 16-18 retention and if the College was at risk of any clawback if the funding is based on 100% retention. Karen Spencer reported that the funding is lagged and should not be subject to clawback. However, a retention factor is built into funding rates. There is no national data available from Government however the AoC’s MIDES report, which collects data from the majority of colleges, reports that national retention is around 91%.

A Governor reported that they understand the need for positive and supportive language to encourage student attendance for English and maths however this is not reflective in the real world. Karen Spencer reported that the positive approach is also backed up by a letter from the Principal outlining the issues and consequences of non-attendance.

A Governor reported that the KPIs and QIP were well thought out, with good targets.

The Corporation approved the Key Performance Indicators 2022-2023 and Quality Improvement Plan 2022-2023, subject to the amendments outlined above.

7 Audit, Finance and Resources Reports

7.1 Audit Committee Reports

7.1.1 Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting – 6 December 2022

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

7.1.2 Item 1 - To receive and approve the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2022

The Corporation received and considered the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2022. Governors were informed that the report had been considered at the Audit Committee meeting held on 6 December 2022 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 2022.

7.1.3 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 2021 to 31 July 2022, 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 2022.

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 2021-22 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 2022 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 2021-2022 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 2021 – 2022 and agreed for it to be signed electronically by Ray Levy, Chair of the Audit Committee.

7.2 Joint Audit and Resources Committee Reports

7.2.1 Minutes of the joint Audit and Resources Committee Meeting – 6 December 2022

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

7.2.2 Item 1 - To receive and approve the Audit Findings Report for the period to 31 July 2022 and the Letter of Representation

The Corporation received and considered the Audit Findings Report, known as the Post-Audit Management Report, for the period to 31 July 2022 and the Letter of Representation, presented by Shachi Blakemore, Buzzacott.

The Corporation was informed that the Post-Audit Management Report has been considered in detail by the joint Audit and Resources Committee at its meeting held on 6 December 2022 and by management.

Shachi Blakemore confirmed that Buzzacott had issued a clean audit opinion for the year ending 31 July 2022 for the Financial Statements audit, the Regularity Assurance audit and the Teachers’ Pension Scheme audit.

Shachi Blakemore highlighted that all deliverables were achieved to timetable and the audit was supported by excellent audit preparation by the College.

Three low level recommendations were raised however Shachi Blakemore confirmed that none of these related to any significant deficiencies and no weaknesses were found. Shachi Blakemore also confirmed that all recommendations raised last year have been completed, with the exception of one.

The Corporation thanked everyone involved in the audit.

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

The Corporation approved the Post-Audit Management Report for the period to 31 July 2022 and the Letter of Representation for the year

ended 31 July 2022 and agreed for the Letter of Representation to be signed electronically by the Chair.

**7.2.3 Item 2 - To receive and approve the Operating and Financial Review 2021-2022
&
Item 3 - To receive and approve the Financial Statements 2021-2022**

The Corporation received and considered jointly the Operating and Financial Review 2021-2022 and the Financial Statements 2021-2022, 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 2022.

Deanne Morgan reported that since the provisional outturn was presented to the Corporation at its meeting on 20 October 2022, there has been some movement in the figures, mostly in line with updating the apprenticeship income.

Governors were informed that the financial health score is good and that one of the bank covenants has not been met. There is however a bank covenant waiver in place from 31 July 2022 until April 2023 as the covenant is calculated on a rolling basis. Deanne Morgan confirmed that the other bank covenant has been met.

Governors were informed that the College's cash position has decreased however this is due to planned capital works being undertaken.

The pension impact is an estimated position and the College is working towards the target set in the financial plan. The financial statements have been presented with and without the estimated impact of the pension.

Karen Spencer reported that as part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) review and reclassification of colleges, the AoC has asked for pension guarantees, as per schools, and it is anticipated that pensions will continue to be a moving picture. Buzzacott has confirmed that the College is in a stronger position than some other colleges in light of the ONS reclassification as some colleges are struggling to have their going concern assessment signed off by auditors, something which was not an issue for Harlow College.

The Corporation approved the Operating and Financial Review 2021-2022 and the Financial Statements for 2021-2022 and agreed that they should be signed electronically by the Chair and the Principal and sent to the Education Skills Funding Agency.

7.3 Resources Committee Reports

7.3.1 Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting – 6 December 2022

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

7.3.2 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 and that they are familiar with the format of the letter and the dashboard.

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

7.3.3 Item 2 - Management Accounts for the period 1 August 2022 – 31 October 2022

The Corporation received and considered the management accounts for the period 1 August 2022 – 31 October 2022, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation noted that the management accounts were considered and discussed in detail by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 6 December 2022.

Deanne Morgan informed the Corporation that for the year-to-date, the College is on target with the figures in the management accounts.

Governors were informed that the covenant breach has had an impact on the October accounts.

Recruitment of 16-18 learners has been more challenging than originally anticipated therefore the income forecast is lower than originally planned and has been adjusted accordingly.

More project income than planned has been secured however there are associated expenditure costs with the project work.

The College is committed to paying staff the Real Living Wage and this has been included in the staff costs forecasts.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is in the middle of a three-year valuation and at present the College is unaware of what the deficit cost for this year will be. The College has budgeted for £140k however it is a risk which has been included on the College's risk register.

A Governor asked about the LGPS which has been classed as an asset which will never be realised. Deanne Morgan confirmed that it is classed as an asset at year-end however it will not be realised. A Governor highlighted there should not be a fictional asset with continual debt. It was reported that the College was following accounting standards set by government.

The LGPS valuation takes place every three years however every year, the accounting position is looked at. In cash terms, the figure as of 31 July annually is an accounting figure.

Deanne Morgan reported that the employer contribution rate and deficit contribution payment affects the monthly management accounts. The amount of these from April 2023 is currently unknown therefore estimates have been included in the accounts.

Karen Spencer reported that colleges are hoping for the same pension guarantee that multi-academy trusts get following on from the ONS reclassification. Although Essex Pension Scheme is reporting that there is no difference with the ONS reclassification, Karen Spencer reported that there could be a difference in who underwrites it, depending on what decision is taken by Government.

Governors were informed that the College's cash position is good and capital expenditure is taking place.

The Corporation approved the management accounts for the period 1 August 2022 – 31 October 2022.

8 Safeguarding Reports

8.1 Minutes of the Safeguarding Committee Meeting – 17 November 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Safeguarding Committee meeting held on 17 November 2022.

8.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2021-2022

The Corporation received and considered the Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2021-2022, presented by Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that it has been a busy year and that training has been a consistent theme throughout the year. Risk assessment training has been undertaken for those students with mental health needs.

Governors were informed that there is a slight achievement gap with bursary and non-bursary learners due to socio-economic factors.

There has been an increase in demand in support from the Safeguarding Team.

Positive destinations for vulnerable students are strong.

There has been an increase in criminal risk assessments, largely due to the increase in the College's NEET provision and working with stakeholders, which demonstrates the inclusivity of the campus.

File management levels were higher in 2021-2022 than in previous years and the team is refining its data and processes. The team is ensuring that data monitoring and disclosures are as tight as possible and is ensuring that learners are well supported.

The team is compliant with statutory responsibilities and a providing a good standard of service to students.

Karen Spencer highlighted that the data in the report sits in the SAR and that the gap in achievement comes back to the retention issue highlighted in previous agenda items. The more vulnerable students, such as those with health needs and socio-economic factors, are less likely to be retained. The College is trying to get underneath the issues to further support these students. A Governor commented that it is clearly a very complex issue which is being addressed by the College.

Governors were informed that there is some mandatory Prevent and Equalities training to be undertaken by all Governors and Ruth Lucas will circulate the links to the training.

The Corporation noted the Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2021-2022.

9 Equality and Diversity Reports

9.1 Minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee Meeting – 23 November 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee meeting held on 23 November 2022.

9.2 Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2021-2022 and Objectives

The Corporation received and considered the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2021-2022 and Objectives, presented by Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Governors were informed that the staff profile remains fairly constant and consistent. The College has purchased an applicant tracking system which captures the whole applicant journey and helps to ensure that there is no unconscious bias.

As a result of the recent staff survey, a Race Equalities and a Fairness and Equity focus group have been set up. Karen Spencer highlighted that satisfaction from staff in minority ethnic groups was significantly higher than that of other staff groups. The College is looking to unpick the data to see if there are any other underlying issues. This will be overseen by the Resources Committee.

Governors were informed that there is an achievement gap between White students and those who are from a Black and Minority Ethnic background, mainly in Maths and Functional Skills. It is believed that this related to ESOL students who have difficulty in understanding the language and terminology used in Maths and Functional Skills.

There is a gap with those who have learning support needs, but do not meet the threshold for high needs support, and it is often challenging to recruit staff in this area. The support is being front-loaded more and recruitment is being brought forward.

There is a need to capture data and put in interventions rapidly. The College is looking to use its Personal Development Coaches to identify student need and understand their lived experiences which in turn will help the College to support them.

Karen Spencer reported that the actions and the student data match what is included in the SAR and the QIP.

A Governor asked if the objectives would be included in the QIP and be reported into the Standards and Curriculum Committee. Karen Spencer reported that the objectives would go into the relevant SEND, Equality and Diversity and Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes reports presented to the Standards and Curriculum Committee. These objectives are a subset of the other actions included in the SAR and QIP.

A Governor asked if the College considered including an objective around closing the achievement gap. Karen Spencer confirmed that there is a KPI which addresses this.

The Corporation approved the Equality and Diversity Annual Report and Objectives 2021-2022.

10 Health and Safety Reports

10.1 Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting – 22 November 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 22 November 2022.

10.2 Health and Safety Annual Report 2021-2022

The Corporation received and considered the Health and Safety Annual Report 2021-2022, presented by Will Allanson, Deputy Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Will Allanson reported that the purpose of the report was to assure Governors that the College meeting its legislative duties.

Governors' attention was brought to Section D on risk assessments and Governors noted that there has been a significant increase in the number of medical and mental health risk assessments undertaken. There has been an increase in demand due to these needs being better identified at enrolment.

Will Allanson highlighted the significant amount of monthly inspections being undertaken and that when hazards are identified, a proactive approach is taken by the College. An online portal has been set up for tracking hazards. Karen Spencer reported that it would be useful to Governors if the hazards were categorised as low, medium and high. Will Allanson reported that all the risks reported at low risk as if anything is identified as high risk, action is taken immediately.

Will Allanson highlighted Appendix 1 which details the number and categories of accidents. Data for 2018-2019 has also been included as 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 were covid years and therefore do not provide a useful comparison.

The Corporation noted the Health and Safety Annual Report 2021-2022.

11 Governance Issues

11.1 Minutes of the Search Committee Meetings – 20 October 2022 & 15 December 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Search Committee meeting held on 20 October 2022 and noted that the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 15 December 2022 will be presented at the next Corporation meeting.

11.2 Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation

The Corporation received and considered the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee following its meeting prior to the Corporation meeting.

The Search and Governance Committee recommended the appointment of Mike Hardware, Harlow District Councillor and Essex County Councillor, as a Governor of Harlow College Further Education for a period of four years, commencing on 01 January 2023.

The Corporation approved the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee as detailed above.

11.3 ONS Review of FE Sector Classification

The Corporation received and considered the report on the ONS Review of FE Sector Classification, presented by Karen Spencer, Principal.

Karen Spencer reported that the ONS review of the FE sector classification was announced on 29 November 2022 and all colleges are to be classed as public sector with this being backdated to 1993.

Governors were informed that the report and attachments contain all the information which is known so far and there is a lot of speculation at present.

The slides from the AoC were highlighted which details what the rules were up until now and what they will be going forward.

One of the key issues is around banking arrangements. Any future borrowing, loans or overdrafts will now need DfE permission.

The dips in funding in January to March each year will be addressed and “smoothed out” however this will not be additional funding.

Permission is required from the DfE for senior postholder pay in excess of £150k.

There is a requirement to use public sector pensions which is something that the College is already doing.

A new accounts direction is to be published in November 2023 for implementation the following year.

The College has been given a £265k grant for energy efficiency measures and a further £265k grant for capital works in the next two years. There are currently no further details on capital programmes.

Guidance on using public funds appropriately will be published however the College has already got good processes in place.

A Governor asked if the Insolvency Regime will continue to apply. Karen Spencer reported that this is yet unknown however the Secretary of State has the power to remove Governing Bodies.

The Corporation agreed that the Search and Governance Committee will oversee this, work through the implications for Governors and bring any issues to the Corporation. Paul Whitehead and Deanne Morgan will join the Search and Governance Committee meetings.

The Corporation noted the report on the ONS Review of FE Sector Classification.

11.4 FE Commissioner’s Termly Letter

The Corporation received and considered the FE Commissioner’s termly letter, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Karen Spencer thanked Laura Wedgbury-Glew and Becky Jones for arranging an immersive visit for a member of staff as part of the FE Commissioner's Team. Following on from this, the member of staff is keen for the FE Commissioner, Shelagh Legrave CBE, to visit the College.

The Corporation noted the FE Commissioner's termly letter.

12 Stansted Airport College Advisory Group – 13 October 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Stansted Airport Advisory Group meeting held on 13 October 2022.

A Governor asked if the College is confident that the recruitment of students is picking up as expected. Will Allanson reported that there was a dip in recruitment last year and that the College was a victim of its own success as Stansted Airport is the fastest recovering airport post-covid. All students achieved employment in the industry hence the dip in student numbers. Apprenticeship numbers have increased this year and business is growing at the airport again.

13 Disability Statement 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the Disability Statement 2022-2023, presented by Karen Spencer, Principal.

Governors were reminded that the statement is published annually and were informed that the statement has been rewritten this year based on best practice seen.

The Corporation approved the Disability Statement 2022-2023.

14 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

15 Dates of Future Meetings

Spring Term 2023	Monday 20 March 2023	9.30am
Summer Term 2023	Thursday 18 May 2023	9.30am
	Thursday 06 July 2023	9.30am