

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Zoom – Thursday 19 May 2022 - 9.30am

Membership:	* Liz Laycock (Chair)	Ya'Eesh Ghodiwala	Maksymilian Peikert
	* Sotirios Adamopoulos	* Eddie Johnson	* Brian Spencer
	* Paul Bartlett	* Brian Keane	Karen Spencer
	Jon Bouffler	* Ray Levy	Paul Taylor
	* Rod Bristow	* Lily Lin	* Michael Travers
	* Julia Fillary		

* denotes present

In attendance: Marian Hollingsworth, Safeguarding Manager (Annual Safeguarding Training only)
Will Allanson, Deputy Principal
Paul Whitehead, Vice-Principal
Becky Jones, Vice-Principal
Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance
Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance

Annual Safeguarding Training

Marian Hollingsworth delivered the annual safeguarding training to Governors.

Governors were informed that the presentation will be circulated after the training and that all Governors need to read the Keeping Children Safe in Education document in full, the links to which are contained within the presentation.

Governors were given the opportunity to ask questions.

Liz Laycock asked if the images in the last few slides were being shared with students. Marian Hollingsworth confirmed that they are being shared with students by the learner mentors.

Paul Bartlett asked if the Corporation received regular updates on issues raised in the presentation. Marian Hollingsworth confirmed that regular meetings are held with the Safeguarding Governor and Liz Laycock highlighted that the minutes of the Safeguarding Committee are shared with the Corporation. Ruth Lucas reminded Governors of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Annual Report which is presented to the Corporation annually in December. Liz Laycock reported that Governors would not have detailed reports on cases and issues seen in College due to confidentiality.

Liz Laycock highlighted that colleges' response to peer on peer sexual abuse is a key focus by Ofsted and it is vital that the College does not lose sight of this.

Paul Bartlett asked in relation to the cost of living crisis, the impact this is having on families and if this is likely to have an impact on the College. Marian Hollingsworth reported that the College has its own food bank which is supported by staff and there is a high demand for this at present. The College logs when it gives out food vouchers and learners can also access Harlow food bank. The College is also seeing the impact that high gas and electricity prices are having on learners.

Sotirios Adamopoulos highlighted that it is being reported that police officers are being asked to use their discretion when dealing with people stealing treats.

Liz Laycock highlighted the need to be clear between welfare and safeguarding and that the “it could happen here approach” being taken by the College is the best approach to take.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Jon Bouffler, due to work commitments, Paul Taylor, due to holiday, Karen Spencer, due to personal reasons and Ya'Eesh Ghodiwala and Maksymilian Peikert, both due to studying commitments.

2 Declaration of Interests

There were no new additional declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes and the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 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 College-Wide Climate Survey (minute 3 – Carbon Reduction Roadmap refers)

Liz Laycock reminded Governors to complete the climate survey recently circulated by Ruth Lucas.

4.2 Qualification Reforms (minute 8 – Principal’s Report refers)

Liz Laycock reported that this will be covered in more detail with Governors next half term as the information has only just been published.

5 Search Committee Reports

5.1 Minutes of the Search Committee Meeting – 10 May 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Search Committee meeting held on 10 May 2022.

5.2 Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation

The Search Committee recommended the appointment of Dawn Turner as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee.

Ruth Lucas provided some information on the role of a co-opted member and highlighted Dawn's experience.

The Corporation unanimously agreed to appoint Dawn Turner as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee.

6 Principal's Report

The Corporation received and considered the Principal's Report, presented by Will Allanson, Deputy Principal.

Will Allanson reported that the College is revisiting its core values, strategic intentions and strategic plan, set against the context of coming out of the pandemic and developments in teaching, learning and assessment. Governors noted, however, it is not a full rewrite of them and that inclusion and sustainability will be more prominent.

Will Allanson reported that the landscape is changing in terms of skills and funding, with the development of local strategic improvement plans (LSIPs) and local skills boards. The aim is for colleges to be more responsive to local skills' needs and Governors noted that the College's application to the Strategic Development Fund will help to address this.

Will Allanson reported that the College is looking to align its focus with an eye on Ofsted and its new inspection framework which is being released imminently.

Governors were informed that workshops have taken place with the College's Executive and managers, reviewing the College's approach to teaching, learning and assessment and the core values and this will be revisited at the Governors' strategic planning event on 29th June. Becky Jones asked for any feedback on the teaching, learning and assessment approach outlined in the Principal's Report be fed back to her by 22 June in preparation for the strategic planning event.

Rod Bristow asked if adult education and the lifelong learning entitlement will be covered at the strategic planning event and how big the College's concern is around the removal of Level 3 qualifications for T-Levels.

Liz Laycock highlighted the need for the outline agenda for the strategic planning event to be circulated more than seven days in advance of the event.

Will Allanson reported that he will draft an agenda with Karen Spencer and Ruth Lucas which will be shared with Governors and confirmed that adult education and Level 3 qualification reforms will be discussed at the event.

Ruth Lucas highlighted the need to keep the strategic planning event and the July Corporation meeting distinct and separate as the event will not be minuted like the Corporation meetings are.

The Corporation noted the Principal's Report.

7 Resources Committee Reports

7.1 Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting – 10 May 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 May 2022.

Eddie Johnson asked about the cost of the electric charging points which have increased in cost from £20k to £60k and asked if any further discussion has been held around this since the Resources Committee meeting.

Paul Whitehead reported that £60k is still in the College's capital plans and a Salix grant for the work is being explored. Will Allanson confirmed that a notional price of £20k was originally put in the budget however this has increased now quotes have been received.

Paul Whitehead reported that there are tax implications irrespective of whether the College charges for the use of the charging points or not. If it does not charge for the use of them, it will be classed as a benefit in kind to employees and if it does charge for use, there will be a tax on the income. The College is looking into charging for the use of them as there will be less of an impact on employees than if it was a benefit in kind. Paul Bartlett asked if advice has been sought on the benefit in kind as this is not how it is classed for him. Julia Fillary confirmed that this was also the case for her. Paul Whitehead reported that advice has not been sought yet however the College will get some before a final decision is made. Deanne Morgan reported that the HMRC advice and guidance has not yet been published.

7.2 ESFA Financial Health Rating Letter and Governing Body Financial Dashboard

The Corporation received and considered the ESFA financial health rating letter and the Governing Body financial dashboard, presented by Deanne Morgan – Executive Director – Finance.

Deanne Morgan reported that the letter confirms the College's financial health rating as outstanding and highlighted the accompanying Governing Body dashboard. Liz Laycock reported that both documents are a positive outcome for the College.

The Corporation noted the ESFA Financial Health Rating Letter and Governing Body Financial Dashboard.

7.3 Management Accounts 1 August 2021 – 31 March 2022

The Corporation received and considered the management accounts for the period 1 August 2021 – 31 March 2022, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that the management accounts were discussed in detail at the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 May 2022.

Deanne Morgan reported that the biggest challenge is the Adult Education Budget and the current predicted deficit is due to this. The College is however diversifying its income and has expanded its project income.

Deanne Morgan confirmed that the College continues to meet the bank covenants and has good financial health. Governors were reminded of the bank covenant waiver which is in place which is enabling the cash that was generated last academic year to be spend in this academic year.

The Corporation noted the management accounts for the period 1 August 2021 – 31 March 2022.

7.4 Financial Planning 2022 – 2023

The Corporation received and considered the report on financial planning 2022 – 2023, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that the report had been discussed in detail at the Resources Committee meeting held on 10 May 2022.

Deanne Morgan reported that the report is a work in progress and that at the Corporation meeting in July, the final version will be presented for approval. This version will have already been subject to scrutiny at the joint Resources and Audit Committee meeting in June.

Governors noted that, as agreed at the last Corporation meeting, the current budget for 2022 – 2023 is a deficit budget with recovery the following year. Governors also noted that the bank covenants are forecast to be met and the financial health rating is forecast to be good.

The Corporation noted the report on financial planning 2022 – 2023.

8 Stansted Airport Advisory Group Meeting – 12 May 2022

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Stansted Airport Advisory Group meeting held on 12 May 2022.

Liz Laycock reported that it was good to see better attendance at this meeting. Ruth Lucas reported that a new representative from Uttlesford District Council has been appointed to the Group and that a replacement from the school sector is being sought from the Uttlesford Heads Group due to the current member retiring at the end of this academic year.

Will Allanson reported that application numbers for STAC have increased and the number of referrals and enrolments at Stansted Academy have also increased.

Liz Laycock highlighted it was good to hear from the students who attended the meeting.

Julia Fillary asked about the competition from the private training provider and if this would have an impact on the College going forward. Will Allanson reported that the provider can offer Category B licence training for engineers which is an advantage

however their facilities and location is a disadvantage. The College can only offer Category A licence training however part of STAC phase 2 is to offer Category B. Will Allanson reported that STAC has the skills pipeline with learners who are 16 – 18 year olds and that puts the College in a stronger position than the private training provider apart from the Category B licence training therefore it is not envisaged that the provider will have a significant impact on the College. Michael Travers suggested that the competition from the private training provider should be added to the College's risk register.

Liz Laycock reported that the number of new connections being made by the College is positive and that whilst there is a need to keep an eye on threats, the College is going in the right direction.

Will Allanson informed Governors of the challenge to STAC's logo and branding which has been made. Following on from discussions with the College's solicitors, the best agreed option is the rebranding of STAC, keeping the existing logo however changing the colours with a link to sustainability. The rebranding will take place over a period of time to limit the costs to the College.

9 FE Commissioner's Letter

The Corporation received, considered and noted the content of the FE Commissioner's letter, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

10 Governor Training and Development

Lily Lin has attended two AoC Chairs and Vice-Chairs Q&A sessions.

Liz Laycock has attended an ETF AoC Governance Conference and the AoC East of England Chairs' Network meeting.

Paul Bartlett reported that he has undertaken safeguarding training personally and Ruth Lucas asked for him to forward the details onto her.

Ruth Lucas reminded Governors of the ETF's Governance Development Programme and its online training modules. The training is being moved over to a new platform however once this has been done, Governors should make use of the training modules.

11 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

12 Dates of Future Meetings

Summer Term 2022	Thursday 07 July 2022	9.30am
		This will be held onsite at Harlow College.

Ruth Lucas presented the proposed plan for onsite and virtual meetings for the rest of this academic year and for the following academic year, which has been developed following the feedback from the recent survey.

Brian Spencer asked about hybrid meetings. Ruth Lucas reported that when meetings were designated as onsite meetings, the expectation is for Governors and staff to attend in person. If there are circumstances that prevent this from happening however people could attend virtually, then that will be accommodated.

Ruth Lucas asked Governors to provide her with any feedback on the proposals.