

**HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
CORPORATION MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 October 2015

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

* denotes present

In attendance: M Stokes, Deputy Principal
L Turner, Vice-Principal
A Phillips, Executive Director of Finance
S Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal (agenda item 1880 only)
D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation
R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation

1871 Apologies for absence and a welcome

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from P Bartlett, C Christofides, M Coleman, E Johnson, R Locke and B Spencer.

1872 Declarations of Interest

K Spencer, M Stokes and D Sheridan declared an interest in Agenda Item 1885 – Senior Postholders.

1873 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Corporation approved the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2015 as a true and accurate record, and they were signed by the Chair.

1874 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

1875 Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation

The Corporation agreed the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee to appoint Julian Bedford as a governor to the Corporation for a period of four years. J Bedford introduced himself and Governors noted, as an engineering employer, his particular fit with the development of the Advanced Manufacturing Centre.

P Taylor welcomed the two new Student Governors, J Adams and L Jones.

1876 Election of the Chair of Harlow College Further Education Corporation

Paul Taylor was nominated for the position of Chair of the Corporation by M Prodger and seconded by S Adamopoulos.

The Corporation unanimously elected Paul Taylor as Chair of the Corporation for the period 10 December 2015 – 9 December 2016.

1877 Provisional Outturn for 2014/15

The Corporation received and considered the provisional outturn for 2014/15, presented by M Stokes, Deputy Principal and A Phillips, Executive Director of Finance.

A detailed discussion was held around the provisional outturn and Governors noted that following:

- ³⁵₁₇ A surplus target of £700k was set and the current position is a surplus of £769k, however there could be some change to the final surplus figure when the accounts are audited.
- ³⁵₁₇ A £500k target reduction in non-pay expenditure was set and an actual reduction of £627k was achieved.
- ³⁵₁₇ There has been an improvement in the net worth of the College.
- ³⁵₁₇ The College's cash flow is now around £1m at its lowest point. Governors agreed this was a good position to be in. A question was raised about whether this money could be invested and it was agreed that A Phillips would investigate this and report back to the Resources Committee. Governors identified that the number of cash days was omitted from the report.
- ³⁵₁₇ Capital expenditure – work has been completed in Building K and East Walk. Investment has also been made in the College IT infrastructure.
- ³⁵₁₇ There was no breach of the banking covenants throughout the year.
- ³⁵₁₇ The SFA financial health rating is good.
- ³⁵₁₇ There is likely to be some minor adjustments to the accounts following on from the external audit and the College is waiting for the final pension provision.

Governors acknowledged that the current national picture poses challenges in managing finances and budgets and agreed that the provisional outturn is indicating that the College is in a good position.

K Spencer thanked M Stokes, A Phillips and the finance team for their hard work.

The Corporation noted the provisional outturn for 2014/15.

1878 Management Accounts for the period 1 August 2015 – 30 September 2015

The Corporation received and considered the management accounts for the period 1 August 2015 – 30 September 2015, presented by M Stokes, Deputy Principal and A Phillips, Executive Director of Finance.

A detailed discussion was held around the management accounts and Governors noted the following:

- ³⁵₁₇ The College has recruited its highest ever intake of learners aged 16-18 years. The end of year target is 2,517 learners and currently the College has enrolled 2,454 learners. There are ongoing NEET and adult programmes for 18 year olds that the College will continue to enrol learners onto throughout the year.
- ³⁵₁₇ The College has had a promising start with apprenticeships and there is a possibility that the College could increase its numbers.
- ³⁵₁₇ The largest growth areas in the College are engineering and electrical

engineering. The College is making good connections with these areas, the curriculum and the Advanced Manufacturing Centre.

³⁵₁₇ There was a reduction in the Single Adult Budget at the start of the year and there is a possibility that there could be further in-year cuts announced as part of the Government's spending review which will be announced in November 2015.

³⁵₁₇ It is likely that the College will exceed its Single Adult Budget target.

³⁵₁₇ The project-based ESF funding has not yet been released, however the College is in a good position to respond to it when it is announced.

The Corporation noted and approved the management accounts for the period 1 August – 30 September 2015.

1879 Freedom of Information Report

The Corporation received and considered the Freedom of Information Report, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation, which demonstrated that the Corporation had met its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Corporation noted the Freedom of Information report,

1880 Safeguarding Annual Report 2014/15

The Corporation received and considered the Safeguarding Annual Report, presented by S Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal.

The Safeguarding Annual Report for 2014/15 was discussed in detail and Governors noted the following:

³⁵₁₇ The College has assessed its safeguarding practice as effective and strong.

³⁵₁₇ The College has maintained its statutory requirements for training. An extra 28 staff have been trained to Level 2 and Level 3 training has been upgraded.

³⁵₁₇ 219 students were brought to the attention of the safeguarding team during 2014-2015. The overall retention rate of these students was 83%, with a predicted success rate of 72%.

³⁵₁₇ Three child protection referrals were made.

³⁵₁₇ An incident was reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), however, once an investigation had taken place, there was no evidence found of a safeguarding concern.

³⁵₁₇ The College continues to work with a wide variety of agencies to help and support students.

³⁵₁₇ There has been some changes in relation to the PREVENT agenda, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation and the College is providing training for staff on these areas.

³⁵₁₇ New systems for reporting safeguarding concerns have been established and the College is ensuring that it is working within its PREVENT duties.

³⁵₁₇ With ESOL courses being delivered by the College, more intensive support is required for some students. There are currently students from twelve different nationalities studying ESOL at the College.

J Adams asked if the training was available for students as well as staff. K Spencer and L Turner confirmed that mandatory PREVENT tutorials were being delivered to all students this term along with safeguarding training and that all student ambassadors will undergo safeguarding training. Identifying extremism is also forming part of student tutorials.

S Adamopoulos thanked the safeguarding team and student services team and asked whether female genital mutilation would be embedded into student tutorials. The Principal reported that the College will take a targeted approach to raising awareness proportional to the volume of risk. It will be covered in more detail with students who are likely to enter careers where these issues may present, such as health and social care.

The Corporation noted the annual safeguarding report for 2014/15.

1881 Strategic Area Reviews

The Corporation received a presentation from K Spencer, Principal, on strategic area reviews. Governors noted the Government's policy statement "Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions" and were encouraged to read it.

K Spencer highlighted that for every £1 spent on further education, there is a return on investment of between £14 and £21 in terms of productivity.

Specific plans for this Parliament come in the following three strands:

1. Clear, high quality professional and technical routes to employment.
2. 3 million apprenticeships.
3. National Colleges and Institutes of Technology.

Post-16 education is a non-protected budget and the sector is expecting further cuts in the autumn Spending Review.

The Government is undertaking between 40 and 44 strategic area reviews nationally to review post-16 education and present a set of recommendations for each area. The general process of undertaking the area reviews was explained to Governors and Governors noted that it will be for the governing body of each individual institution to decide whether to accept the review's recommendations. The exact process and which area the College will be part of is not yet known, however, all area reviews are to be completed by March 2017 and a timetable for this to be achieved is due to be announced by the end of November 2015.

A detailed discussion was held around area reviews and implications for Harlow College. The following points were raised by Governors:

- ³⁵₁₇ The College should work closely with the local Members of Parliament .
- ³⁵₁₇ Students from Harlow need more encouragement to play greater roles in College and to help shape the College's future.
- ³⁵₁₇ The College needs to consider whether it is going to be on the "front foot" or simply go through the process.
- ³⁵₁₇ A discussion around where the College would like to be and whether it should be pushing this agenda should take place.
- ³⁵₁₇ The whole process could happen rapidly.
- ³⁵₁₇ Should the College be leading a consortium?

The Corporation agreed that a group of Governors should be established to look at the potential different options for the College and to ensure it is in a strong position to respond to and engage with the area reviews.

The Corporation noted the presentation on strategic area reviews.

1882 Reports from Committees

Search and Governance Committee – 6 October 2015

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee held on 6 October 2015.

Governors noted that attendance at meetings has improved however agreed that they should not be satisfied with 80% attendance.

R Lucas highlighted the self-assessment of governance which had been circulated to all Governors to complete.

³⁵ ₁₇ **To approve the Whistleblowing Policy**

The Corporation received, considered and approved the Whistleblowing Policy, subject to the following amendments:

Section 1.1 – replace the word “high” with “highest”.

Section 6.4 – replace the word “secret” with “confidential”.

Audit Committee – 13 October 2015

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Audit Committee held on 13 October 2015 and noted that due to new procurement rules the College needs to retender for its external audit services.

Advanced Manufacturing Centre Working Group – 05 October 2015

The Corporation received and noted the notes of the Advanced Manufacturing Centre Working Group meeting held on 5 October 2015.

Governors noted that the strip-out of Building H will commence on Monday 26 October. The building will be demolished by the end of the year and the new build will start in the new year. Tenders for the building work are still coming in and once these have been finalised a final price can be agreed with the main contractor. The AMC Working Group will continue to meet and the Corporation will receive regular progress reports.

The College has been successful in a bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership for specialist equipment to be placed in the Centre.

The Clydesdale facility letter was approved at the Corporation meeting on 2 July 2015 subject to review by the College’s solicitors. Some minor amendments were suggested and the letter was revised and signed by P Taylor. The Corporation approved the minute of this as required by the bank and the minute was signed by P Taylor, Chair of the Corporation.

1883 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

1884 Dates of Future Meetings

Autumn Term	Thursday 10 December 2015	08.30am
Spring Term	Thursday 17 March 2016	08.30am
Summer Term	Thursday 19 May 2016	08.30am
	Thursday 14 July 2016	08.30am

1885 Senior Postholders – Confidential Item

This agenda item was minuted separately.

Self-Assessment Report Validation

After a presentation by K Spencer, Principal and L Turner, Deputy Principal, Governors divided into panels to undertake the validation of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2014-15 with individual teams from across the College.

Following this, Governors met to agree the grades and content in the SAR for outcomes for learners, quality of teaching, learning and assessment, personal development, behaviour and welfare and leadership and management.