

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting

held Wednesday 28 September 2022, commencing 6pm

Present Joanne Chilton (*Chair*), Helene Jones (*Vice Chair*), Andy Dobson (*Principal*), Aisha Benachour, Shabir Chagan, Lee Clulow, Alexandra Fratila, Clair Graham, Andy Hanson, Ian Hughes, Alison Jarrett, Raj Joshi, Tiffany Harvey-Pallent, Gail Rothnie, Joanne Rouse and Mark Sterling,

In attendance Joanne Williams (*Deputy Principal, Director of Learning and Teaching*)
Jacquie Carman (*Vice Principal, Chief Operating Officer*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)

The new student governor was welcomed and all present introduced themselves.

1		Apologies
		Apologies were received on behalf of Jamie Clayton, and Thomas Huntbatch.
2		Declarations of Interest
		All staff present declared an interest in item 6.2a Staff Pay.
		<i>Following consideration of a resolution under Standing Order 8 Proceedings at meetings regarding withdrawal from the meeting, it was resolved that staff and student governors would withdraw for item 6.2a Confidential Staff Pay and Conditions and the item would be taken as a confidential minute.</i>
		<i>It was further agreed that item 6.2a would be moved to the last item on the agenda.</i>
		<i>Guidance on College email addresses and Multi-Factor Authentication was provided by Jon Priest, Director of Information Services.</i>
3		Minutes
	3.1	Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held 6 July 2022
		The minutes of the Corporation Meeting held 6 July 2022 were approved as a true record, subject to a minor revision to clarify apologies. Under Matters Arising from the minutes: From the Corporation Meeting 6 July 2022, 5.3a Ofsted Update, members noted this was addressed under the agenda.
		Strategic
4	4.1	Principal's Report
		Andy Dobson highlighted key points from his report addressing the start of the new academic year. In considering enrolments members asked several questions to understand enrolment on adult courses and fewer than expected second year returning students. Regarding adult courses it was noted that the College had chosen to target a small and contained course offer, which it sought to increase gradually. Adult enrolment was similar to that of 2021 and subject to potential funding clawback,

		<p>however targeted marketing would again be deployed to continue to increase course take-up as this was effective last year.</p> <p>It was noted that fewer returning second year students also seemed to be apparent in other Colleges. Halesowen College had been in touch with non-returners to encourage continuation and while employment appeared to be one driver, the overall picture was unclear. The Association of Colleges was seeking to review this issue. It was also noted that further analysis could be done to ascertain if some non-returners had impacted starts on new courses.</p> <p>Andy Dobson highlighted how some awarding bodies had delayed issue of results which had impacted students. Members were also updated on problems with T Levels, particularly Health and Science. Joanne Williams answered questions to highlight that both complaints and mitigations had been raised and that student progression had been addressed. Members noted that further analysis of student achievement would be provided to the Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee.</p> <p>It was noted that staff turnover, which had increased, remained lower than the national average, and below pre pandemic levels.</p> <p>Andy Dobson outlined the impact of the current industrial action taking place and members discussed complexities around staffing. Governors asked a range of questions seeking assurance on clarity and effectiveness of communication with staff, students and the public. In particular the tension between affordability for meaningful pay awards and budgeting for recurrent and capital expenditure was noted. Members were informed of potential further industrial action through other teaching and support staff unions.</p> <p>Andy Dobson summarised that in the current environment colleges remained crucial to the Government's skills agenda and that the gap between pay for College lecturers and schoolteachers continued to increase.</p> <p>The report was received.</p>
5		Performance
	5.1a	Safeguarding Update – Keeping Children Safe in Education
	5.1b	Safeguarding Policy and Procedure updated
	5.1c	Review of Policy on Sexual Violence and Harassment
		<p>Joanne Williams highlighted for members the key changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education on which all members of staff had been updated. Policy updates were provided addressing sexual violence and harassment and addressing reporting of low-level concerns. Additionally the College was undertaking a trial of digital background checks as a part of safer staff recruitment.</p> <p>Governors raised several questions which Joanne Williams answered, the responses and outcomes being that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with regards to succession measures, the Safeguarding Team had some new members of staff and the team was building expertise • the policy for student admission and declaring offences had been strengthened and that risk assessments were undertaken, however there was scope for further work in gaining all the necessary information from applicants and from professionals addressing individual cases • regarding online monitoring, managers received reports • the safer recruitment online checks were being conducted via an external agency

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Policy on Sexual Violence and Harassment would be checked and amended if necessary to address circumstances where an allegation proved to be false <p>The update was received.</p>
	Action 5.1a	Information would be provided to the Students' Curriculum and Quality Committee on volume and significant action relating to online monitoring.
		The revised Safeguarding Policy and Procedure was approved.
		The Policy on Sexual Violence and Harassment was approved.
	5.2	Final Review of Annual Plan and Targets 2021/2022
		<p>Jacquie Carman reported that the final review illustrated that the residual actions of the 2021/2022 Annual Plan had been actioned or were in progress. The updating of the website had been delayed enabling the rebranding work to take place , however this was included in the 2022/2023 plan.</p> <p>With regards to questions on expanding the Health curriculum members noted that a T-Level had been introduced and that further developments were dependent on factors including both the College's estate and from qualifications coming online, (Dentistry T-Level for example was delayed).</p> <p>Members also asked to be updated on the rapid improvement plan for Apprenticeships. Joanne Williams reported on staff appointments and the development and management approach moving forward.</p> <p>The Corporation noted that actions deemed closed at the July Corporation meeting had been removed from the report and received the final review of the 2021/2022 action plan.</p>
	5.3	Annual Plan and Targets 2022/2023
		<p>In considering the Annual Plan and Targets for 2022/2023 the key significant work streams to support the key strategic aims had been encapsulated in the plan provided for approval.</p> <p>Members discussed an additional target on students achieving their predicted targeted level. It was recognised that this was more challenging to extrapolate for vocational courses and that while value added data was available there were still challenges in drawing conclusions from it due to the effect of TAG grades. The ALPS value added system was looking to rerun its data based on 2022 outcomes, which would provide a more robust comparison in relation to other colleges. It was agreed that it was important to consider more than pass rates and that data should begin to become more reliable moving forward. Members also added that regional data would be useful and noted that national data would be provided in March.</p>
	Action 5.3a	It was noted that the national benchmarked data would be provided for the Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee in accordance with the cycle of business March 2023.
		The Corporation considered the report and with the addition of a target on students achieving their predicted level of achievement, approved the annual plan and associated targets for 2022/23.
	5.4	Ofsted Update
		Members noted the changes to inspection judgements with enhanced inspections including a separate review of skills and that staff development had taken place on the new inspection approach.

		<p>Members discussed the actions the College was taking on development and improvements and commended the work on collaboration with other key organisations locally and regionally in addressing the skills improvement agenda.</p> <p>Understanding the curriculum offer and clarity on key areas of development focus were further discussed, noting the Apprenticeships rapid improvement plan, A level and AS result challenges, a new policy and actions to address attendance challenges and a new role and policy approach on behaviour expectations of students.</p> <p>The update was noted.</p>
	Action 5.4a	It was agreed that the Chair and Clerk would meet with Joanne Williams on taking forward a new section in the Self-Assessment Report this year.
6		Compliance
		Finance
	6.1	Indicative Financial Performance (previous year)
		<p>Members received the outlined indicative financial performance report for 2021/2022, prior to the consideration of the final accounts in December.</p> <p>Jacque Carman highlighted areas of variance but that the outturn reflected the budget revision 3 which was approved by the Corporation in June 2022.</p> <p>Members noted the position regarding pension liability to be determined and Jacque Carman confirmed the adjustments stated for FRS102 relating to the previous year.</p> <p>The position was noted.</p>
	6.2b	Review of Expenses Policy
		<p>Jacque Carman outlined the key points being provided for consideration in recommending a review of the Staff Expenses Policy. Set against the high-level risk of staff recruitment and retention, concern was for increased fuel costs negatively impacting staff whose roles relied on high levels of essential usage of their vehicles.</p> <p>Detailed discussion took place around rationale, staff at the lowest end of the College pay scale, management of tax and the HMRC standard and consideration of other options to best support staff impacted by rising costs.</p>
	Action 6.2b	While wishing to be supportive the Corporation deferred the review of Expenses Policy and asked that further options be provided for consideration.
	6.3a	Compliance Report on Conditions of Funding -ESFA
		<p>Members received the report that rated the compliance of the College with the ESFA conditions of funding.</p> <p>Under a traffic lights system there was one red rated area on the piloting of digital background checks under safer recruitment practices.</p> <p>Members noted that the action plan associated with this contractual plan be monitored through the College Leadership Team and reported to the Audit Committee.</p>
	6.3b	Compliance Report on Conditions of Funding -WMCA
		Members received the report which rated compliance with the WMCA conditions of funding and noted that under the traffic light system there were two red rated conditions. The first (as with the ESFA conditions) pertained to strengthening the

		College's safer recruitment processes by piloting digital background checks. The second regarding an increase in record retention was being queried. Members noted that the action plan associated with this contractual plan would be monitored by the College Leadership Team and reported to the Audit Committee.
6.3c		College Financial/Funding Return
		The College Financial Forecasting Return was noted.
		Other
6.4		Closure and Deregistration of Nursery
		Jacque Carman outlined the rationale for closing the nursery as previously considered by the Corporation. A verbal report was received to confirm that following consultation and liaison with parties affected the College Nursery would formally close on 29 th September 2022. Ofsted had been contacted to deregister the nursery. It was noted that while parents had been understandably disappointed a notice period had been afforded and all staff had managed to gain other employment.
6.5		Security Service Provision
		Members discussed the current outsourced provision of security services for the College. The historical and current service provision together with the option to take the service in-house through Halesowen College Enterprises Limited was considered, particularly benefits, terms and conditions of staff and risks to service and costs. Members noted that it was not uncommon for Colleges to have in-house security and that the opportunity for security staff to be more engaged with behaviour procedures, health and safety and estates, together with in-house training and development was very positive. Members were supportive of the new model and noted the risk factors as outlined.
7		Consultation
	7.1	Governance Council Consultation
		The Clerk outlined the key points and timeliness of the review and consultation by the Governance Council and that a survey response would be provided on behalf of the Corporation.
8		Any Other Business
	8.1	Corporation Away Day January 2023 (verbal)
		The Chair outlined that the focus of the away day was governor self-assessment as part of a three-year cycle which included external review. There would also be appropriate training which could include Finance, Safeguarding and the new inspection framework. The away day would take place on site.
9		Date of Next Meeting The next meeting was noted as scheduled for 4pm, 13 December 2022.
		<i>Staff and student governors left the meeting. Clair Graham left the meeting.</i>
6	6.2a	Confidential Report Staff Pay and Conditions

	A confidential minute was taken.
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The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Actions from Meetings			
Ref	Agenda item and action	Review Date	Reported by
Corporation Meeting 6 July 2022			
Action 5.1a	Draft Minutes of the Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee, 15 June 2022 A report would be provided for the Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee on challenges for meeting student special requirements for exams.	Nov 2022	JWi
Action 5.3a	Ofsted Update It was agreed that an update would be provided to each Corporation meeting.	Sept 2022	JWi
5.3b	Members asked to be invited to any relevant training relating to the new Inspection Framework.	Dec 2022	
Action 6.1ba	Draft Budget 2022/2023 Members also asked about an increase in fees for higher education courses, as discussed by the Finance and Resources Committee. Jackie Carman confirmed that there had been an increase and that this was below the upper threshold, which would be considered for 2023 following consultation with partners. <i>Report to Students Curriculum and Quality Committee and Corporation</i>	2023 Autumn 2022	JCa
Action 8.6a	Corporation Self-Assessment Report That members review and highlight actions and governor contributions as the minutes unfold across the cycle of business to support governor self-assessment review. <i>Governance Review scheduled for January 2023</i>	2022/2023 Jan 2023	All
Corporation Meeting 28 September 2022			
Action 5.1a	Safeguarding Update – Keeping Children Safe in Education Information would be provided to the Students' Curriculum and Quality Committee on volume and significant action relating to online monitoring.	Nov 2022	JWi
5.3a	Annual Plan and Targets 2022/2023 It was noted that the national benchmarked data would be provided for the Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee in accordance with the cycle of business March 2023.	March 2023	JWi
5.4a	Ofsted Update It was agreed that the Chair and Clerk would meet with Joanne Williams on taking forward a new section in the Self-Assessment Report this year.	Nov 2022	
6.2b	Review of Expenses Policy The Corporation deferred the Review of Expenses Policy and asked that further options be provided for consideration.	Dec 2022	