



**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING
HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2022**
At the Warrington Campus and remotely via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Mervyn Ward	Chair
Andrew Bainbridge	Member
Martin Berman	Member
Stephen Broomhead*	Member
Robert Cox	Member
Lucy Gardner	Member
Sam Naylor*	Member
Nichola Newton	Principal
Peter Scott*	Member
Kirstie Simpson*	Member

In attendance:

Michelle Seeley	Deputy Principal: Finance and Resources
Rebecca Salisbury-Moss	Assistant Principal: Business Collaboration and Growth
Rebecca Welch	Assistant Principal: Quality & MIS
Andrew Williams	Vice Principal: Curriculum
Laura Churchill	Clerk to the Corporation

*remote attendance

1 AOC PRESENTATION FROM RICHARD CAULFIELD

For information: to receive a presentation on the bigger picture in the FE sector from Richard Caulfield, Association of Colleges (AoC)

- 1.1 Members received and noted the AoC presentation.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

For noting: to receive any apologies for absence

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Geoff Spencer and Peter Lloyd.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

For noting: members to declare any interests in items on the agenda

- 3.1 Mervyn Ward and Steven Broomhead declared an interest in projects discussions, consistent with their positions as Director of Livewire and Chief Executive of Warrington Borough Council respectively.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

For resolution: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2022

Q- A member asked whether the ESFA had decided to make changes to the financial health calculations for colleges to determine financial health grades.

R- Members were informed that no decision had been made as yet.

It was **RESOLVED** that members approved the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2022.

5 MATTERS ARISING

For discussion: to consider Actions Log and any other matters arising from above

Q- A member asked whether the cyber security training for governors had been finalised.

R- The clerk reported that the IT manager had confirmed the training would be available from the week commencing the 3 October.

5.1 In respect of the Vale Royal action, members agreed that it was important for governors to be visible at both campuses.

Members **CONSIDERED** the Actions Log.

6.1 CHAIR'S ACTIONS

For resolution: to approve any actions taken by the Chair on behalf of the Corporation since the last meeting

6.2 *For resolution: to ratify the action taken by the Chair to approve the Student Disciplinary Policy*

It was **RESOLVED** that members ratified the action taken by the Chair to approve the Student Disciplinary Policy 22-23

7 STRATEGIC MATTERS

7.1 Principal's Report

For information: to receive a State of the Nation presentation from the Principal

7.1.1 Members were taken through the presentation by the Principal.

Q- A member asked whether there was detailed analysis in terms of recruitment numbers across different curriculum areas.

R- Members were informed that there was detailed analysis and there were a variety of contributing factors for disparity in recruitment, including the job market.

Q- A member asked whether the recruitment of staff in the more buoyant curriculum areas was a challenge.

R- Members were informed that the college's key recruitment challenges were in the construction trades area. It was reported that the college had recruited a number of staff in the area directly from industry, however, they required support in terms of developing pedagogical skills.

- 7.1.2 In respect of recruitment, members were informed that many of the 16-18 year-old Vale Royal learners had opted to travel to study at the Warrington campus. Members noted that a Vale Royal working group meeting was due to be held in October to discuss the strategy for Vale Royal.

Members **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the presentation from the Principal.

7.2 Strategic Aims and Key Priorities

For approval: to consider and if so minded, approve the strategic aims and key priorities for 2022/23

- 7.2.1 Members discussed that they had seen a draft of the strategic aims and priorities towards the end of the last academic year and that it was pleasing to see the inclusion of the college's values around partnerships and collaboration.

- 7.2.2 Members agreed that the college had seen a marked rise in vulnerable learners and that the college was absolutely committed to being an anchor institution for the areas and communities it served.

- 7.2.3 It was reported to members that as part of the strategic planning for the college, a root and branch review of post 19 provision would be undertaken during the academic year.

Q- A member asked in regards to the focus on digitalisation, how some of the adult community lecturers were supported with professional development given their low number of contact hours at the college.

R- Members were informed that the college placed high value on its part time staff and was committed to offering the same continuing professional development as that for full time staff.

C- A member challenged whether financial efficiency and effectiveness should form part of the college's values.

ACTION 1 – Principal to include financial efficiency and effectiveness as part of the college values

- 7.2.4 A member commented that the town was hosting several Ukrainian guests and that there may be an opportunity for the college to work with the local authority in respect of English as a second language courses and funding.

ACTION 2 – Principal/Vice Principal to contact the local authority to discuss English as a second language courses

It was resolved that members **APPROVED** the strategic aims and key priorities for 2022/23

7.3 Draft KPIs 2022-23

For approval: to consider and if so minded, approve the KPIs for the academic year 2022-23

- 7.3.1 Members were informed that most of the targets from the previous year had been retained and that the college wanted to be on the trajectory towards outstanding. It was explained that there had been new KPIs added in relation to HE. Members also noted that in respect of apprenticeships, there was the new accountability framework in place.

- 7.3.2 It was outlined that the college's approach to monitoring adult community learning had changed and that recruitment onto adult courses remained a key challenge and risk.
- Q- In terms of recruitment from disadvantaged postcodes, a member asked whether there was the same data available for the Vale Royal area.
- R- Members were informed that the same data was available and analysed for both campuses.
- Q- A member asked whether the college would be engaging with the Teaching Excellence Framework for HE.
- R- Members were informed that the college would be engaging, however, engagement was still optional, so the college would look to engage in 23/24.
- 7.3.3 The DP:FR outlined that the financial KPIs were linked to the CFFR reporting and would continue to be refined as the academic year progressed. Members noted that the changes would also pull through to the management accounts which would be presented in the revised format to the November Finance and Resources Committee meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that members approved the KPIs for the academic year 2022-23

7.4 External Review of Governance Update

For information: to receive and note an update on the proposed plans for the external review of governance

7.4.1 The Clerk updated members about the plans for the external review of governance and also drew members' attention to their new statutory duty to review how well the education or training provided meets local need.

7.4.2 It was explained that the November strategy morning would be focusing on the college's work with stakeholders and employers, the college's use of market labour intelligence and the Board's collaboration with governors at other local education providers.

Members **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** an update on the proposed plans for the external review of governance

Nicola Meredith joined the meeting at 9:30am

8 ENROLMENT UPDATE

For information: to receive an update on enrolment for the academic year 2022/23

- 8.1 Members were informed that the college's post 6-week target for 16-18 year old recruitment was 1689 and that at the present time, 1719 learners had been enrolled. It was explained to members that based on previous years, there would be a small number of early leavers which would likely mean that the post 6-week figures would drop to below 1689 and there would therefore be a lagged funding impact. Members were assured, however, that for some curriculum areas there was demand in excess of capacity and any early leavers would be replaced by learners on the waiting list.
- 8.2 Members were informed that the college was reviewing the offer for young people not in education, employment or training in October and that the college was investing significant time and resource in social media recruitment campaigns.

- 8.3 It was explained to members that recruitment for adults and HE learners carried monetary targets and that the college's internal funding group met fortnightly to monitor numbers. Members were made aware that there was a significant shortfall in adult recruitment which was representative of the picture nationally. It was explained to members that the college were doing extensive work around making adult courses affordable given the context of the cost of living increases.

Sam Naylor left the meeting at 9:45

Peter Scott left the meeting at 9:45

- 8.4 It was reported to members that the business centre manager roles were outward facing roles with income targets and that under the new leadership structure, these postholders reported to the Assistant Principal: Business Collaboration and Growth.
- 8.5 In respect of HE recruitment, members noted that the current enrolment figure was 153 which was the same as the position last year. It was explained that the college were exploring the possibility of a January intake.
- 8.6 Members were appraised of the buoyant apprenticeship recruitment position but noted that the signup process was onerous, and therefore the college was doing everything possible to support employers, particularly smaller employers, with the process.

Members **RECEIVED** an update on enrolment for the academic year 2022/23

Nicola Meredith left the meeting at 10am.

9 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Laura Williams, Director of Safeguarding, will deliver the Board's annual safeguarding training.

The safeguarding training was postponed to the 1 November 2022.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Projects Update:

- 10.1 In respect of the Institute of Technology ('IoT'), members noted that Cheshire College South and West were now in discussions with the Department for Education (DfE) about costing and that the college had not been party to the discussions. Members were informed that the college had been allocated some additional funds for the IoT, £251k, to support with the dramatic increase in the cost of materials, however, there had still been a need to further revise the plans in order to deliver within the budget, which had been submitted by AA Projects but not communicated to the college. The DP:FR explained that AA Projects had issued an apology for the lack of communication. It was explained to members that the current shortfall was £124k. Members noted that although there was a 10% contingency for the project, it was not enough due to the dramatic cost of living increases and cost of materials. Members expressed concern over the project's risk.
- 10.2 Members noted that as part of the IoT, there had been the introduction of a carbon net zero target and that the college had expressed concern over the request given that the IoT would only be delivered in part of the Winsford building but it was not feasible to only make part of the building carbon net zero. For it to encompass the whole building would be exceptionally costly. It was reported to members that the college had requested an additional meeting with the DfE in respect of the net zero refurbishment.

- 10.3 Members discussed and agreed that there were concerns in respect of the IoT and as such, an update paper was requested for presentation at the November meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee.

Pay Update:

- 10.4 Members noted that the college had proposed to the unions a pay increase in line with the AoC recommendation of 2.5% plus a non-consolidated payment of £750 for those earning £25k or less and £500 for those on £25k or more. It was reported that the college also proposed a 2.5% pay increase scenario with weighted elements towards the lower paid staff to the unions. It was explained that the college had spent considerable time looking at pay scenarios and assessing what the college could afford, but the current uncertainties around then cost of living increases was problematic.
- 10.5 It was discussed that the college had now made a saving of £112k in respect of the National Insurance contribution decrease and that a proposal had been put to the unions to use the savings to increase the non-consolidated payment amount to £1000 for staff earning less than £25k and £750 for staff on £25k and above. It was also discussed that the National Insurance saving could be used in a different way to provide a 3.5% increase, consisting of a 2.5% fixed increase and a 1% non-consolidated increase which could be reviewed at the year end. Members were reminded that the college was facing a ballot and that there were also concerns regarding staff workload.
- Q- A member asked whether staff were concerned over the non-consolidated element of the proposed pay increase.
- R- Members were informed that some staff were very positive about the non-consolidated lump sum because it would provide much needed assistance in the short term.
- C- Members commented that the non-consolidated element may cause issues in the long term with staff expecting the uplift to be continued.
- 10.6 It was discussed that pay negotiations and potential strike action were not sector specific and that many sectors were facing difficulties in this regard. Members were informed that as soon as there were updates on the pay discussions, they would be communicated to the Board.
- Q- A member asked for assurance that the college had plans in place should a strike go ahead.
- R- Members were informed that the college were looking at contingency plans to minimise disruption to learners should the strikes go ahead.

11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

*For information: to note that the next meeting of the Corporation will take place on Tuesday 6 December at 5pm**

The meeting closed at 10:10am.