

Waltham Forest College



THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2024

MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Youness Abidou	apologies	Member, Vice Chair of the Corporation, Chair of F & R
Antoinette Beekye	present	Staff Member
John Bell	present	Member
Paul Butler	present	Member, Chair of the Corporation, Safeguarding Champion
Simon Deschenes	present	Member
Michael Eichhorn	apologies	Member, Chair of A & R
Janet Gardner	present	Member, Principal & Chief Executive Member
Andrew Hall	present	Member, sustainability champion (via Teams)
Susannah Hume	present	Member, SEND Champion
Thamilarasi Jasitharan	present	Staff Member
Remi Iyun	present	Member, EDI Champion
Bryan Johnston	present	Member
Alison Morris	present	Member, Corporation Vice Chair, Chair of C & Q, Skills Champion
Renatta Nzomono	present	Member
Amir Seyyad	present	Member, Health & Safety Champion
Leon Smith	present	Member
Gbeminyi Soyinka	present	Member
Ridoan Hoque	apologies	Student Member
Kwasi Owusu-Mensah	present	Student Member

CLERK TO THE CORPORATION

Naomi Shoffman Director of Governance (DoGov)

IN ATTENDANCE

Hassan Rizvi	Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)
Abena Rodman -Tay	Deputy Principal Finance & Resources (DPFR)
Jack McCabe	Assistant Principal TLA (AP TLA)
Melanie Price	Director of HR (DoHR)
Amir Ahmed	Assistant Principal (AP)
Nadeem Khalifa	Director of BIDU (DoBIDU)

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) the Corporation agreed that meetings may be held using Teams videoconferencing as per the Waltham Forest College Instrument & Articles, Instrument 1 (g).

87.24 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

i. The Chair, formally opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. He highlighted the importance of this Corporation meeting, which provided an opportunity to evaluate progress, address challenges, and ensure strategic alignment for the upcoming year.

ii. Apologies were received from Mr Abidou and Mr Eichhorn who have both taken a leave of absence and Mr Hoque due to personal commitments.

iii. Appointment of Governor

The Corporation, having considered the recommendation from the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee, approved the appointment of Mr Deschenes as a Governor to the Corporation and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Mr Deschenes was invited to join the meeting.

The Chair reminded everyone that the papers will be taken as read, most of which have been through committee, and asked that presenters highlight key points in their reports in order to allow sufficient time for discussion debate and discussions.

88.24. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None

89.24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS CORPORATION MEETING 15 OCTOBER 2024

i. The Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 15 October 2024, were agreed by the Corporation to be signed by the Chair as a true record.

The DoGov confirmed that all actions have either been completed or have not yet reached target date.

ii. Chair's Action Report: There had been no use of the Corporation seal or Chair's delegated powers since the last meeting.

90.24 MATTERS ARISING

None

91.24. STUDENT GOVERNOR REPORT

The Student Governor presented a detailed and engaging report on student engagement, leadership initiatives, and event highlights.

1. Student Union Elections 2024/25

- Record-breaking participation with 2,552 votes, a 26% increase from 2023/24.
- Drivers for success included:
 - Enhanced visibility through Freshers' Fair.
 - Improved digital promotion and targeted campaigns.
 - Increased number of nominees creating competitive dynamics.

2. Recent Events and Achievements

- Winter Market (12 December):
 - Part of the College of Sanctuary initiative.
 - Celebrated diversity and creativity with 300+ attendees and positive feedback.
- Armistice Day Parade (11 November):
 - Public Services students marched to the Town Hall, participating in a moment of silence.
- Jack Petchey Achievement Awards:
 - Recognised outstanding student achievements, with winners from diverse academic areas boosting community morale.

- Student Council Meeting (14 November):
 - Attended by 150 Class Representatives.
 - Focused on learning strategies, leveraging AI for academic success, and collaborative innovation.

3. Future Initiatives:

- Proposed Activities: Talent shows, student-led podcasts, and expanded leadership-driven events.
- Continued support for College of Sanctuary initiatives to embed values of inclusivity and community engagement.

4. Youth Advisory Group Application:

The Student Governor Kwasi Owusu Mensah shared his experience of applying for a national advisory role. He reached the group interview stage but was not selected. However, through the experience he gained valuable skills in competitive settings and demonstrated resilience, with a commitment to future leadership pursuits.

Discussion points:

1. Engagement Drivers: Governors praised the increased voter turnout and sought insights into strategies employed. The Student Governor said this was due to enhanced engagement at Freshers' Fair and effective use of digital platforms for promotions.
2. Sustainability of Initiatives: Governors emphasised the importance of ensuring the continuity of engagement activities through structured leadership programmes and robust succession planning.
3. Personal Development: Governors commended the Student Governor's proactive approach to external leadership opportunities and noted this experience as a valuable addition to their personal and professional development.

Summary:

The Corporation commended the report and recognised the Student Union's efforts in enhancing inclusivity, promoting leadership, and fostering a strong sense of community among students. The success of recent events and the proactive planning for future initiatives were acknowledged as key drivers for sustained engagement.

Actions Agreed:

Feedback Collection: The Student Union to develop a feedback mechanism for events to assess impact and improve planning for future initiatives.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE REPORT.

92.24 PRINCIPAL'S COLLEGE REPORT

The Principal presented her report and highlighted the following key points:

1. Political and Policy Updates

- Youth Guarantee Initiative: The initiative aims to ensure all young people (16-24) access education or training to combat unemployment and NEETs; Its initiative's success depends on sufficient funding and accessibility.
- Level 3 Qualifications and Curriculum Review: Upcoming decisions on Level 3 funding and curriculum reviews could impact 65% of current provision. Mitigation strategies include developing A Levels and GCSE pathways to prepare for potential defunding.
- New English & Maths Funding Guidance (2025/26): Teaching hour requirements for Functional Skills (FS) and GCSEs to increase by 1,511.5 hours which will have implications for staffing and budget; business planning will need to address this demand.
- Office for Students (OfS) Registration Pause: Registrations have been paused due to sector-wide financial fragility and has delayed the College's HE plans, so a £100k investment in HE readiness is temporarily on hold. A letter with stakeholder endorsements has been sent to OfS highlighting the local impact.

2. Funding Updates

- Economic Impact Report: The final version highlights the College's £40M annual contribution to the local economy. The reports is being positioned as a lobbying tool for improved FE funding.

- Financial Health: WFC achieved "Outstanding" financial rating with £3M income growth and a surplus of £1.4M.
 - Multiply Funding: WFC secured an additional £65k for adult maths training through March 2025.
 - Learner Growth: Enrolment has increased by over 400 learners to 2,584, with in-year growth funding anticipated.
3. Strategic Risks
- KPIs: The risk of not meeting quality and financial targets could impact outcomes and reputation.
 - Adaptability: Policy/funding changes may hinder growth and sustainability.
 - Space Constraints: Persistent estate challenges may limit capacity to meet demand.

Discussion points:

1. Space Challenges:

- Governors emphasised the urgency of addressing short-term space issues.
- Flexible timetabling and leveraging external partnerships was suggested to alleviate constraints.
- Long-term estate planning was highlighted as a strategic priority.

2. Governors stressed the importance of effective resource allocation to mitigate risks.

3. Leveraging the Economic Impact Report:

- Governors encouraged wide dissemination of the report to strengthen relationships with councils, funding bodies, and industry partners.
- Governors noted the importance of highlighting the College's contribution to local skills development and economic resilience.

4. Delayed HE Plans:

- The OfS registration implications discussed Governors discussed exploring alternative HE pathways through partnerships with universities.

5. Strategic Relationships:

- Governors highlighted the importance of maintaining and expanding collaborations with external stakeholders to support growth.

Actions Agreed:

1. Resource Allocation: Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to model financial and staffing scenarios to address the increased teaching hours, this will happen as part of business planning for the new academic year.
2. Estate Strategy: Incorporate short-term and long-term space planning into the upcoming Strategy Day agenda.
3. Stakeholder Engagement: Disseminate the Economic Impact Report to local councils, funding bodies, and industry stakeholders.
4. HE Pathways: SLT to explore partnerships with universities and other providers to mitigate delays in HE programme delivery.

Summary:

The Corporation commended the Principal's comprehensive report, noting strong financial performance, learner growth, and proactive strategies to address emerging challenges as well as effective ongoing stakeholder relationships. Governors supported the recommended actions and acknowledged the College's efforts to sustain quality and reputation amidst policy and funding changes.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **NOTE THE STRONG YEAR END OVERALL QUALITY AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE COLLEGE AGAINST KPIS FOR 2023/24 AND GOOD PROGRESS TO DATE FOR 2024/25**
- **APPROVE THAT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ESTATE ARE FURTHER EXPLORED AT THE GOVERNORS' STRATEGY DAY.**
- **NOTE THE CONTINUED POSITIVE PROGRESS TO FURTHER INFLUENCE THE REPUTATION OF THE COLLEGE AND WIDER SECTOR**
- **MONITOR THE IMPACT OF FORTHCOMING EDUCATIONAL AND QUALIFICATIONS REVIEW AND EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES WHICH COULD IMPACT THE EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE AND CONDITIONS FOR STAFF**

93.24 PAY GAP REPORT

The DoHR presented her report and highlighted the following key points:

1. Gender Pay Gap: Significant progress has been made in narrowing the gap, primarily due to equitable representation in leadership roles.
2. Ethnicity Data: 25% of staff did not disclose their ethnicity, limiting the College's ability to fully analyse and address pay disparities.
3. Disability Disclosures: Only 7% of staff disclosed a disability, constraining efforts to comprehensively assess and address pay equity for this group. Disability pay gaps were noted as negative, attributed to higher earnings among those who disclosed.

Discussion points:

1. Improving Data:

Governors emphasised the importance of continuing to build trust and addressing privacy concerns to encourage staff disclosure such as disabilities and highlighted the need for targeted campaigns to raise awareness about the benefits of sharing data for advancing equity.

2. Benchmarking Progress:

Governors queried how progress is being measured and if comparisons with sector benchmarks were available. The Director of HR noted that the College was among the first to publish such detailed reports, limiting external comparisons but underscoring a commitment to transparency.

3. Leadership Development:

Governors discussed ongoing leadership programmes aimed at supporting career progression for underrepresented groups, particularly ethnic minorities and women. Governors expressed the importance of ensuring these programmes translate into measurable outcomes in pay equity.

4. Positive Trends:

Governors acknowledged the improvements in gender and ethnicity pay gaps but expressed concern about the proportion of undisclosed data.

Actions Agreed:

1. Data Awareness Campaigns: HR to design and implement initiatives encouraging staff to disclose ethnicity and disability data, addressing privacy concerns and fostering trust.
2. Tracking Progress: Continued monitoring of pay gaps and regular review of targeted interventions to ensure sustained improvements.
3. Impact of Leadership Programmes: Assess the effectiveness of leadership initiatives for underrepresented groups, ensuring alignment with equity goals and inclusion of outcome metrics in future reports.

Summary:

The Corporation commended the College's commitment to addressing pay gaps and its transparency in reporting. Governors emphasised the importance of improving data disclosure rates and incorporating benchmarking to deepen analytical insights. The actions agreed aim to build on positive trends and enhance equity across all staff demographics.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE REPORT.

The DoHR withdrew from the meeting.

94.24 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

The AP presented his report and highlighted the following key points:

- An 8% year-on-year increase in referrals, attributed to effective awareness campaigns and students' growing confidence in accessing support services.
- The top 3 themes for safeguarding categories are mental health, domestic & relationship abuse and Sexual Violence & Harassment.
- The College trained 45 mental health ambassadors and expanded its Wellbeing Hub to meet rising demand.
- The Safeguarding and Prevent staff training completion rates are not 100% mainly due to long term absence.

- All members of the safeguarding team has been presented with an opportunity to attend a 1:1 external appointment for supervision.
- As requested by Governors several case studies were presented in the report.

Discussion points:

1. Sustainability of Safeguarding Resources:

Governors raised concerns about the College's ability to sustain safeguarding services given rising demand. The Principal outlined plans to explore additional resources and partnerships with external agencies and agreed this was a concern and strain on resources given the significant national rise in mental health concerns

2. Prevent Training Compliance:

Governors suggested refining Prevent compliance metrics to exclude staff on long-term absence, providing a more accurate picture of active compliance.

3. Systemic Barriers:

Governors recommended including data on external agency response times and systemic challenges in future reports to provide insights into barriers to timely interventions.

4. Effectiveness of Current Measures:

Governors commended the safeguarding team for their proactive approach in managing increased referrals and promoting mental health initiatives.

Actions Agreed:

1. Mid-Year Capacity Review: Conduct a review of safeguarding team resources and capacity to address increasing demand effectively.
2. Prevent Compliance Metrics Adjustment: Revise compliance metrics to reflect active staff participation, excluding those on long-term leave.
3. Annual Review of Safeguarding Supervision: Evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding supervision as part of the annual safeguarding review to ensure staff are adequately supported.
4. Systemic Challenge Analysis: Include external agency response times and systemic barriers in future safeguarding reports for better oversight and action planning.

Summary:

The Corporation acknowledged the College's proactive efforts in safeguarding and mental health support.

Governors emphasised the importance of resource sustainability and accurate compliance reporting. Actions agreed aim to ensure that the College continues to provide robust safeguarding services and addresses emerging challenges effectively.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE REPORT.

95.24 SUBCONTRACTING REPORT

The DoBIDU presented his report and highlighted the following key points:

- All subcontractors met quality and compliance expectations, with notable improvements observed in key providers.
- Specialised subcontractors successfully delivered niche programmes, including supported internships.
- Plans were discussed to reduce reliance on subcontractors for 16-18 learners while maintaining the use of specialised providers for targeted initiatives.
- A re-tendering process was outlined, emphasising subcontractor alignment with performance, community impact, and financial sustainability.

Discussion points:

1. Management Costs: Concerns were raised about the hidden costs associated with subcontractor oversight and the resource allocation required to manage these relationships effectively. Governors suggested that the time spent was considered in financial cost and included within future reports so the actual overall costs in real terms was considered going forward.

2. Strategic Alternatives: Governors explored the feasibility of transitioning subcontracted services in-house, which could enhance control and cost-efficiency. Challenges, including space limitations and staffing requirements, were acknowledged as barriers to immediate implementation but agreed this would be further considered during business planning.
3. Future Direction: Governors supported reviewing the subcontracting model to ensure it aligns with strategic objectives, particularly for 16-18 learners. It was agreed that a stress-testing model would be developed to evaluate the feasibility and potential impacts of alternative subcontracting approaches.

Actions Agreed:

1. Enhanced Reporting: Future subcontracting reports will include a detailed column on management costs to provide greater transparency and facilitate better oversight.
2. Stress Testing: The College will develop a feasibility model to assess the potential impact of transitioning subcontracted services in-house, addressing factors such as cost, space, and staffing.
3. Strategic Review: The subcontracting model will be reviewed, with a focus on reducing reliance on external providers for 16-18 learners while maintaining partnerships for specialised services.

Summary:

The Corporation commended the College's subcontractors for meeting performance and compliance standards. Governors supported strategic efforts to optimise subcontracting arrangements, balancing cost efficiency and quality delivery. Actions were agreed to enhance reporting, explore in-house service delivery options, and refine the subcontracting strategy.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE REPORT.

The AP and DoBIDU and Mr Owusu-Mensah withdrew from the meeting.

96.24 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING ON 26 NOVEMBER 2024

The Chair of the Committee presented the draft minutes of the Committee meeting on 26 November 2024 and reported on the items and discussions covered at the meeting.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING.

97.24 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2023-24

The DPFR presented the following reports and documents which had been previously presented by the financial statements' auditors to and thoroughly scrutinised by the Board at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 26th November 2024:

- Financial Statements Report 2023-24.
- Audit Findings Report.
- Regularity Audit Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SARQ).
- Letter of Representation.

The final draft presented here incorporates the changes, and amendments agreed with the Financial Statements Auditors at that meeting. The annual accounts key highlights are:

- Surplus: The College reported a surplus of £1.4M, maintaining its "Outstanding" financial health rating.
- Cash Reserves: High liquidity at 290%, alongside minimal borrowing, contributed to overall financial stability.
- Audit Opinion:
 - The Financial Statements were deemed to provide a true and fair view of the College's financial position.
 - Compliance was confirmed with UK GAAP and the College Accounts Direction.
- Regularity Audit: The regularity audit confirmed that income and expenditure were applied for their intended purposes and aligned with governing authorities. No material issues were identified.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE:

- **THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2023-24 AND THE AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT**
- **THE REGULARITY AUDIT REPORT**
- **THE LETTER OF REPRESENTATION**

98.24 INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

The DPFR presented the Internal Audit Service Annual Report for 2023-24 and highlighted the following:

- The Annual Report provided a “Strong Assurance” rating, the highest possible, reflecting:
 - Effective governance processes.
 - Robust financial and risk management systems.
 - Value-for-money initiatives.
- Benchmarking data overall shows the College is performing better than most comparable clients.
- Six low-priority recommendations were noted, with resolutions expected by 2025.

Discussion points:

Governors praised the financial outcomes and the “Strong Assurance” rating but stressed the importance of monitoring the implementation of low-priority recommendations to maintain continuous improvement.

Action Agreed:

Audit Follow-Up: The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to complete implementation of the six low-priority recommendations, ensuring they are resolved by the target deadline of 2025.

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED THE INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

99.24 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE 2023-24

The DoGov presented the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee 2022-23 which provides a summary of the Committee’s activities, the College’s Audit arrangement and assurance framework, Internal audit findings 2023/24, the Financial Statements and Regularity audit findings 2023/24 and the Committee’s self assessment and evaluation of its effectiveness.

The DoGov advised that this report has been considered by the Audit and Risk Committee and recommended to the Corporation for approval.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE’S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023-24

100.24 INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE APPOINTMENT

The Chair of the Committee reported on the competitive procurement process; from a field of 4 companies, WBG’s performance was rated highly, with assurances of continued objectivity and commitment to quality improvement and as such was being recommended for re-appointment Wylie Bisset (WBG) was reappointed as the Internal Audit Service provider for 2024-25.

Discussion points:

1. **Challenging Auditors:** Governors emphasised the importance of challenging internal auditors to prevent complacency and ensure value-add. It was noted that rigorous scrutiny is vital for maintaining high governance standards.
2. **Training Opportunities:** Governors noted that WBG offered free webinars and training sessions, which had been underutilised in the past. Leveraging these resources could enhance staff expertise and governance processes.

Action Agreed:

Training Utilisation: Develop a training plan utilising WBG’s free webinars and workshops, maximising the value of available training opportunities.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE REAPPOINTMENT OF WBG AS THE INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE PROVIDER.

101.24 DRAFT MINUTES OF CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING ON 19 NOVEMBER 2024

The Corporation received the draft minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting.

The Chair of the Committee reported on the items covered and discussions at the meeting.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING

102.24 COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) 2023/24 AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) 2024/25

The DPCQ provided a brief summary of the College Self- Assessment Report 2023/24(SAR) and Quality Improvement plan 24/25 (QIP) which had been presented to and recommended for approval by the Curriculum and Quality Committee, and highlighted the following:

- Strengths:
 - Effective safeguarding measures and robust contributions to meeting local and regional skills needs.
 - Positive outcomes for learners with high needs (92.8%).
- Areas for Improvement:
 - Apprenticeships and GCSE English and Maths pass rates remain below targets.
- Quality Assurance:
 - Termly performance reviews, targeted CPD, and departmental support are active measures to address identified gaps.

THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE OVERALL SAR GRADING OF “OUTSTANDING” AND THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) FOR 2024/25.

Ms Beekye withdrew from the meeting

103.24 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY REPORT

The DPCQ spoke to the Curriculum and Quality Report for Term 1 and highlighted the following:

- Strong enrolment: with 16-18 learners exceeding the allocation and a growth from 2023/24.
- Successful delivery of induction week, with extended sessions for late enrollers.
- Quality Assurance measures included learning walks focused on attendance, punctuality, and classroom behaviour.
- Induction Survey Results: 94% response rate, with 92% overall satisfaction.
- Improvements in recommending the College and ease of enrolment.
- Attendance and Punctuality require targeted improvement.
- Retention rates for T Levels are above the national average.
- New pathways introduced, including Accounting and Creative Media.
- Expanded partnerships with employers, including Barts NHS Trust.
- A Levels applications, with expanded provision planned for 2025, and GCSE feeder pathways.
- Apprenticeships outcomes were impacted by legacy issues. A detailed action plan is underway to address these.
- UCAS and HE Progression: positive progress noted including to Russell Group Universities

Discussion Points:

1. GCSE Pathways: Governors debated the inclusion of entry-level learners in GCSE pathways, recognising its alignment with inclusivity goals. However, they acknowledged potential impacts on overall pass rates. A review was recommended to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach.
2. Apprenticeship Development: Governors emphasised the need for targeted recruitment strategies and stronger employer partnerships, particularly in high-demand sectors.
3. Attendance Concerns: Governors discussed the College’s strategies to improve English and Maths attendance, including timetabling adjustments and employer engagement.

Actions Agreed:

1. GCSE Pathway Review: Reassess the inclusion of entry-level learners in GCSE pathways. Findings to be presented to the Corporation in July 2025.
2. Apprenticeship Growth Plan: Strengthen partnerships with regional employers and develop a recruitment strategy for apprenticeships by the next academic year.
3. Attendance and Punctuality: Implement incentive schemes and timetabling adjustments to improve attendance in English and Maths.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE PROGRESS ON THE KEY ASPECTS OF CURRICULUM AND QUALITY

104.24 COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT

The DPCQ presented a summary of complaints and compliments for the 2023/24 academic year and highlighted the following:

- Formal complaints received in 2023/24, were slightly higher than in 2022/23, reflecting increased overall numbers of students.
- Key categories included organisation, welfare, and admissions, primarily linked to increasing demands for mental health support and EHCP delays with the Council.
- 100% of complaints were resolved within the 14-working day target.
- 16 compliments were received, reflecting positive feedback on staff support and student behaviour at external events this has also increased compared to the same period in the previous year.

Discussion Points:

- Governors noted improvements in complaint management and commended the College for its transparency.
- Concerns were raised about systemic issues with EHCP referrals and local authorities; the prayer-time policy and emphasising the need for clear communication and consistent enforcement.

Actions Agreed:

1. EHCP Communication Improvements: Clarify processes for parents and carers, addressing delays due to borough consultation requirements.
2. Prayer-Time Policy Enforcement: Reinforce attendance expectations through student engagement and the Code of Conduct.
3. Compliment Recognition: Share compliments with relevant departments for staff appraisal and motivation.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE REPORT.

105.24 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING ON 10 DECEMBER 2024

The Corporation received the draft minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee Meeting.

The Chair of the Committee reported on the items covered at the meeting and key points discussed the majority of which are substantive items on this agenda.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

106.24 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT (OCTOBER 2024)

The DPFR spoke to the Management Accounts to 31 October 2024. She highlighted the key points and progress against the financial plan and those issues that could impact on the college accounts.

Governors praised the College's financial management and requested continued vigilance against any emerging risks, particularly as funding environments remain uncertain.

THE CORPORATION:

- RECEIVED AND NOTED THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 OCTOBER 2024 RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE.
- NOTED THE KEY FINANCIAL RISKS BEING MANAGED AND THE MITIGATING ACTIONS BEING TAKEN BY THE COLLEGE.

107.24 UPDATE ON CAPITAL PROJECTS

The DPFR presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- West Wing: Construction has been completed; and snagging is underway.
- Swimming Pool: the project is on track for completion by February 2025, with no major delays reported.
- LSIF Green Project:- The College has secured grant funding from the Greater London Authority (GLA) to develop a renewables project as part of a regional partnership. The Project entails the construction of a Passivhaus ME Training School and Ecohub. Work on this has commenced and is due for completion in July 2025 for completion.
- The persistent issues with countryside contractors, particularly regarding safety concerns and project delays.
- The structural adjustments in some projects which required additional oversight to avoid further delays.

Discussion Points:

- Return on Investment (ROI): Governors stressed the importance of tracking ROI for all capital projects to assess whether expected benefits align with initial business cases.
- Contractor Oversight: Robust monitoring mechanisms and legal interventions were discussed to address ongoing disputes and ensure contractor compliance.

Action Agreed:

Capital Project Evaluations: Develop a framework for post-completion evaluations of capital projects to measure ROI and alignment with business case objectives.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE FECTF PROGRAMME, POST 16 CAPACITY PROJECTS AND LSIF GREEN PROJECT

108.24 POLICIES

The DPFR presented the following revised policies and highlighted the changes within:

- Treasury Management Policy: Updated to reflect best practices in liquidity and risk management.
- Reserves Policy: Strengthened guidelines for maintaining financial stability and cash flow adequacy.
- Financial Regulations: Revised to align with updated financial controls and regulatory requirements.

Discussion Point: Governors noted the importance of maintaining flexibility in policies to adapt to funding changes while safeguarding the College's financial health.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE THE REVISED POLICIES.

109.24 HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE

The DPFR presented the Health and report which demonstrates consistent compliance with health and safety standards across all College sites.

Governors noted that no major incidents were reported but requested updates on ongoing safety concerns in capital project sites, particularly involving countryside contractors, part of the council housing development next to the college.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:

- **NOTE THE CONTENTS OF HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE REPORT.**
- **NOTE THE KEY RISKS BEING MANAGED BY THE COLLEGE AND ACTIONS TAKEN.**

110.24 STUDENT UNION ACCOUNTS

THE CORPORATION RECEIVED AND NOTED THE STUDENT UNION FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2023/24.

111.24 RISK MANAGEMENT -REVIEW OF THE UPDATED RISK REGISTER

The DPFR presented the updated risk register and highlighted key risks impacting the College's operations and strategic priorities.

Discussion Points:

- Governors supported the College's expression of interest in the GLA Green Fund to finance sustainable projects, emphasising the importance of aligning environmental goals with strategic estate expansion.
- The Corporation encouraged exploring additional external funding opportunities to address both sustainability and estate improvement needs.
- Governors underscored the urgency of the updated estate strategy to address space limitations, ensuring alignment with enrolment growth and curriculum expansion. Estates plans will be an area for further discussion at the January 2025 Strategy Day.
- Governors were pleased that the college continues to place emphasis and importance on meeting the Cyber Essentials certification deadline, not only to comply with ESFA mandates but also to safeguard sensitive College and learner data.

Actions Agreed:

1. Estate Strategy Development: Incorporate estate expansion priorities into the January 2025 Strategy Day agenda, focusing on addressing space constraints in technical areas and aligning with learner growth. Include an assessment of potential funding streams, including external grants and partnerships.
2. Sustainability Goals: Continue exploring external funding opportunities, including the GLA Green Fund, to support sustainable development projects.

THE CORPORATION NOTED THE RISK REGISTER AND THE MITIGATING ACTIONS BEING TAKEN.

112.24 GOVERNANCE REPORT

The DoGov presented her Report and highlighted the following points presented for approval as recommended by the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee:

- Governor appointment (see minute 87.24iii)
- Temporary changes in committee leadership roles to ensure continuity following the departure of key members. A comprehensive review of Corporation leadership roles will be conducted in March 2025 to confirm longer-term appointments.
- Key Highlights of the Annual Governance Report:
 - The Corporation achieved an "Outstanding" rating for governance effectiveness, reflecting strong alignment with strategic priorities and operational oversight.
 - Notable strengths included:
 - Robust committee structures and alignment with the Corporation's strategic objectives.
 - Effective risk management practices.
 - Proactive engagement in strategic oversight and decision-making.
 - Governance Action Plan areas of focus for 2025.

Discussion Points:

1. Governance Action Plan: Governors emphasised the need to monitor the Governance Action Plan rigorously to ensure continuous improvement and the sustainability of high standards.
2. Succession Planning: Governors stressed the importance of a proactive approach to succession planning, particularly in light of anticipated leadership changes and evolving governance demands. The Corporation agreed that maintaining a balance between experience and new perspectives was critical for sustaining governance effectiveness.
3. Maintaining Excellence: The Corporation reflected on the alignment between committee work and Corporation-level discussions, noting this as a key factor in achieving its "Outstanding" rating. Governors agreed that high levels of scrutiny and strategic focus are essential for achieving beyond-outstanding performance in the coming years.

Action Agreed:

Schedule an SGR meeting in beginning of spring term to address succession planning, committee structures, and governor roles.

Summary:

The Corporation noted the outstanding self-assessment outcomes and endorsed the proposed governance actions. Governors emphasised the importance of proactive succession planning and rigorous monitoring of the Governance Action Plan to sustain high standards and enhance strategic alignment.

THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE:

- **THE APPOINTMENTS OF:**
 - **MS MORRIS AS CHAIR OF THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE,**
 - **MR SEYYAD AS CHAIR OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE (AND DE FACTO AS A MEMBER OF THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE)**
 - **MS NZOMONO AS CHAIR OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE. THESE APPOINTMENTS WILL BE REVIEWED AT THE CORPORATION’S APRIL MEETING.**
- **THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT**
- **THE GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN 2024-25**

Staff Governors and staff members withdrew from the meeting.

113.24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No additional items were raised for discussion.

114.24 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEETING

Governors provided feedback on the meeting’s proceedings:

- Governors commended the depth of discussion and clarity and transparency in reporting, emphasising the importance of maintaining strategic focus.
- Governors commended the robust discussions, which demonstrated thorough committee work and strong institutional governance.

115.24 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

- **Strategy Day:** Saturday 18 January 2025
- **Corporation Meeting:** Tuesday 1 April 2025
- **Strategy Day:** Saturday 17 May 2025
- **Corporation Meeting:** Tuesday 8 July 2025

Minutes 116.24 -118.24 recorded under Part 2

The meeting concluded at **21:15**.

These minutes have been approved by the Corporation as a correct record.	
CHAIR: Paul Butler	DATE: 1 April 2025
	REMOTE CONFIRMATION: OR SIGNED: PB