West Thames College Further Education Corporation

Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation Strategy Day
held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 8 February 2023
at the College

Present:	Mr S McGeoch (SM)	Chair
	Ms T Aust (TA)	Principal
	Mr S Wilcox (SW)	
	Mr A Barke (AB)	
	Mr A Rides (AR)	
	Ms A Cornish (AC)	
	Mr A Alimohamed (AA)	
	Mr J Bryant (JB)	
Apologies:	Mr A Smith (AS)	
	Mr B Armstrong (BA)	
	Ms T Kaur (TK)	
	Mr L McBirney (LM)	
	Ms B Sandhu (BS)	
	Ms C Callinan (CC)	
In Attendance:	Mr J Bolt (JB)	Associate Member
	Ms C Ajit Singh (CS)	Associate Member
	Ms K Frost (KF)	Head of Governance
	Mr M Michaelides (MM)	Executive Director Resources and Student Experience
	Mr M Cooper (MC)	Executive Director Finance, HR and Development
	Ms M Gajewska-Kopczyk (MGK)	Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality
	Ms K Lehmann (KL)	Director of Creative Industries
	Ms A Cutler	Assistant Principal – Teaching, Learning and Quality.

1/23 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from AS, BA, TK, LM, BS and CC. It was noted that the meeting was quorate.

There were no declarations of interest relating to the items on the agenda.

2/23 Ofsted Update

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality gave an update about Ofsted covering:

- Inspections from September 2022.
- The role of the corporation.
- The college position.

- Accountability statements.

The Principal gave an update on the new accountability measures:

- Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs): The West London Local Skills Improvement Plan was in the process of being developed. A West London Skills Summit was held on 25 January 2023. Draft priorities would be produced by end of March 2023 and the final version would be available by end of May 2023. It would be important to ensure the LSIPs didn't lose sight of essential skills in terms of inclusion, digital skills and progression.

- There was a new requirement for the corporation to produce an Accountability Statement which should be based on the LSIP. The Accountability Statement needed to be submitted by 31 May 2023. This would be the focus of the next Corporation Strategy Day.

- A shared governance event for the West London Colleges is being held on 15 March 2023. The focus areas would be LSIPs and Accountability Statements.

Governors asked how Accountability Statements would identify which skills priorities each college would pick up as not every college would address every area of skills need. The Principal said it was up to each college to determine which local priorities they would meet.

Governors asked whether external agencies would be looking at the skills gaps and whether any were missing or whether they would just focus on whether the college was delivering on the skills they had chosen. The Principal said the college would be expected to deliver on the skills it had chosen and would need to demonstrate that it knew what the local skills were along with what evidence the college had about that.

The Principal said the college was in a good position in terms of the work that had been carried out locally and in the region.

Governors suggested thought be given to how the college could support with re-skilling, particularly for over 50s who had taken time off work and now wanted to re-enter the workplace.

An activity was carried out where everyone present reviewed the case study of a college and judged the contribution it had made to meeting local skills needs.

Governors asked about students on ESOL programmes and how the college would articulate that providing ESOL programmes was meeting local skills needs. MGK said the language need was an employability need. Lack of language skills was a barrier to high level employment.

Governors asked what the situation would be if an identified skills gap would require additional funding for the college to be able to offer it, for example: electric vehicles. The Principal said the college would prioritise capital investment to support the priority areas.

The Principal explained that the West London colleges already had structures in place to identify local priorities.

Governors asked who was looking at what it would be like in 5 – 10 years' time, what skills the area would need then for employers who were not yet here. The Principal explained that the LSIP was looking at future needs, projections and forecasts. The work in West London was focusing on future needs and future job roles. LSIPs would be reviewed and revised.

Governors asked about entrepreneurial skills and how they would fit in. The Principal said it would be important this was captured in the LSIP. The college knew that across West London there were a large number of self-employed or SMEs. The college had already done some work with the Creative Enterprise Zone in this area to identify what skills employers needed.

A further update about LSIPs and Accountability Statements would be given at the May Corporation Strategy Day.

3/23   Introductions

Everybody present took part in an activity to introduce themselves.

4/23   Risk Focus

An activity was undertaken to identify key strategic risks and opportunities facing the college.

The results from the activity would be collated and would form the basis of a new strategic risk register. The risk register would be bought back to the corporation for review.

Action: SM/MC

5/23   Dashboard Review

Governors reviewed the Data Dashboard, discussing benefits and possible improvement areas:

The benefits were identified as:

- It's easy to see the college's position in a number of key areas and the detailed commentary is useful.
- The corporation was in a stronger place as a result of the Data Dashboard. It was easier to access information and governors were more aware.
- Updates about Human Resources and Health and Safety Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were now received termly rather than annually which allowed for conversation to take place on a more regular basis.
- The information provided was more accessible and in a better format.
- It gave governors the ability to undertake their responsibilities and to be able to evidence it more.
- The college had received external assurance through internal audits that the Data Dashboard was working well.
- It had changed the visibility and accessibility of KPIs and improved governors' ability to interpret the results.

Improvement areas suggested included:
- Introducing an option to be able to issue a summary dashboard to governors, possibly on a monthly basis.
- Adding in information about trends – what is improving and declining.
- Adding in more traffic lights to the information.
- There was possibly too much information. The college could look at the presentation to clear away any unnecessary information and to avoid duplication.
- A colour coded front page could be introduced to give governors assurance about how the college was performing in key KPIs. The front page could be for Corporation level KPIs with secondary pages for each of the committees. The system could reflect the committee structure.

- The current system took a lot of management time and there was still a high level of manual input required. Consideration could be given to changing the tool to improve this.
- The KPIs needed to reflect the 3 year strategic plan, risks and opportunities.
- The Executive Team report and Data Dashboard could be combined
- Thought could be given to combining the Governor Portal and Data Dashboard or providing quick links from the Data Dashboard to key documents for governors.
- Some reporting was being duplicated between the Data Dashboard and other management information. The amount of duplication could be reduced.

Governors asked the Executive Team to review the Data Dashboard and make a proposal to the corporation about possible changes. The Data Dashboard would need to continue to generate information for governance discussion and to be able to serve both the committees and the corporation. If possible, it would be streamlined so it was less of a burden to maintain. Ideally there would be a single point of access to the Data Dashboard and the Governor Portal for governors.

Action: ET Team

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JB and AC left the meeting.

6/23 Appointment of External Member

On the recommendation of the Governance, Search and Strategy Committee IT WAS DECIDED to appoint Stuart Taylor as an External Member from 9 February 2023 for a four year term of office. Stuart would join the Finance, Resources and Capital Projects Committee.

7/23 Confidential Items

Confidential Items were discussed.

9/23 Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the corporation was Wednesday 22 March 2023. 6.00pm.

Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Lead	Target Date
4/23	Collate the results from the risk exercise into a new strategic risk register for the Corporation and bring it back to the Corporation for review.	SM/MC	May 2023
5/23	Review the Data Dashboard and bring a proposal to the Corporation.	Executive Team	July 2023