

# WESTON COLLEGE CORPORATION

MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON  
THURSDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022

COMMENCING 5.00PM  
Room 216

**Present:** Andrew Leighton-Price (Chair); Dr Paul Phillips (Principal & Chief Executive); Jo Midgley; John Turner; Grahame Paine; Ian Porter; Fiona Waters; Maxine Park; Alex Nestor; Mark Canniford; Ryan Butcher; George Reah; Jacqui Mills; Paul Ashbee

In attendance: Jill Clarkson (Clerk); Vicki Richardson (Deputy Clerk)

1.	<b>Apologies for absence</b>  Gemma Day; Elisha Ward; Ann Driver
2.	<b>Declarations of interest</b>  <b>Ian Porter</b> - regarding Forward Futures  <b>Paul Phillips</b> - regarding Forward Futures, IEI, WE IoT, Offender Learning Services and Somax  <b>Andrew Leighton Price</b> - regarding Forward Futures, IEI, WE IoT, Offender Learning Services and Somax  <b>George Reah</b> - regarding Offender Learning Services
3.	<b>Draft minutes of the meeting 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022</b>  The minutes of the meeting held on the 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022 were scrutinised before being agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
4.	<b>Matters Arising</b>  All matters were included on the agenda.
5.	<b>Principals Report and Strategic Update</b>  The Principal and Chief Executive gave a comprehensive update to governors which included the financial progress of the College broken down into each of the funding strands for the College. All areas were in a favourable position and on or above target.  It was highlighted that the College had a created a three-strand sustainability framework, the three strands were listed Strand 1 College - looking at emissions Strand 2 Careers - Embedding sustainability into all curriculum areas and at all levels

Strand 3 Community - students, staff and community to work together to create a more sustainable community.

The Principal confirmed that the College had held a sustainability breakfast earlier in the day which had involved members of the community, local influencers, staff and students.

Capital investment - it was reported that a considerable amount of work had taken place to recover the issues discovered as not being in place after a member of staff had left the College. The Principal confirmed that the Capital Projects Working Group (CPWG) has been re-established, and that work to achieve BREEAM standards in new buildings were being adhered to.

Paul Ashbee joined the meeting at this point.

The Principal confirmed that a new staff Induction had been created when a higher-than-normal staff turnover had been identified in staff joining directly from industry. These staff had the professional knowledge to teach but were not familiar with the learner needs or the support available in College for learners which was resulting in these staff members feeling inadequate when it was quite the opposite. The new induction process involves staff commencing employment 1 week ahead of joining their areas. During this induction week a comprehensive programme is delivered to ensure they feel able to hit the ground running.

The Principal reported that Weston College had been the only College in the country to have three Beacon submissions through to the final round. He confirmed that the awards ceremony had recently taken place in London and that Student Services and Digital entries had been successful. Governors asked about the third finalist which was the IOT the Principal updated that this was a new initiative which didn't have three years evidence. Governors congratulated all participants on their achievement and the College on now having 17 Beacon Awards in total.

John Turner joined the meeting at this point.

The appointment of the new auditors, Bishop Fleming was confirmed and the Principal confirmed that the Chair of Governors, Chair of Audit and key management had met with Bishop Fleming as part of the implementation. Bishop Fleming were currently looking at timely analysis and the proposed timetable of activities for the College.

As part of the audit issues the outgoing auditors had required the College accounts to be restated, on reviewing the evidence the new auditors disagreed with the decision and management confirmed they could potentially recommend the accounts are again restated. Management warned of the issues this could raise and would recommend strongly that this is not the case but confirmed this would be a decision for Audit Committee.

Governors continued on the theme of audit asking management if the internal audit contract had been tendered at the same time. Management confirmed that this was not the case as the current contract was for 3 years plus an additional 2 years if this was agreeable to both parties. It was confirmed that the extension for a further 2 years had been put in place with the current internal auditors.

Governors appreciated the update given around the finalisation of the loans and the emerging issues which seemed to be causing the delays. The Principal confirmed that the work with Michelmores solicitors was helping to fill the gaps of missing information which was causing some of the delays.

The Principals update went on to cover Curriculum and Support Services at the College with the following emerging themes:

- One Size doesn't fit all
- Less is more
- Recognition of change
- Avoidance of layering
- Cost benefit analysis

Governors asked the Principal to identify the main challenges facing the College these were identified as:

- No increase in funding
- Staff retention
- Breadth v Quality
- Succession Planning
- Introduction of a staff intern scheme
- Quality v Finance
- Learning Corridor (Taunton to Swansea)

The Principal concluded his presentation with the an update on Ofsted following his attendance at a recent briefing. Governors noted that Weston College would have 6 days' notice of inspection and moving forward inspections would take place every three years.

The Principal, Chair of Corporation and Deputy Chair of Corporation noted a positive meeting with WECA around adult provision.

A Governor requested that the sustainability strategy discussed earlier in the meeting be circulated to Governors so that it can be used to measure progress against target.

**Action:** Clerk to circulate the Sustainability Strategy.

A Governor questioned Management on staff retention and home working. The Principal responded confirming staff where possible could work 1 day per week from home

## 6. Presentation on the Health and Sport Faculty

Dean for Health and Sport Joel Powis was welcomed to the meeting; he gave a comprehensive presentation which updated the position of student recruitment for the academic year 2022-2023 in health, this included application numbers for FE and T-Levels. He confirmed that the application numbers were positive and above numbers for the current academic year. He went on to cover apprenticeships in health highlighting to members that these were driven in partnership with UHBW.

The next part of the presentation looked at Sport, he confirmed that FE applications had increased for 2022-2023, although the current APP enrolments were down on the current academic year. The FA contract was highlighted as due to commence in August 2022 and that planning was underway for an in-year intake for sports students at L2 and L4.

The Dean continued his presentation moving on to give an update on the recruitment of staff within both Health and Sport and the issues faced to recruit and hold onto good staff.

	<p>Governors noted that most of the vacancies had now been recruited to or were out to advert. They also commended on the quality of the adverts being used during the staff recruitment process.</p> <p>Governors noted that some of the issues faced with getting staff released from UHB - for the time in College as part of their qualification-was proving difficult due to the lack of staff within the health service itself.</p> <p>Governors questioned the Dean on working within the private health sector. The Dean confirmed that students were working within the private sector but mainly in community care.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Contracts and Commercial report and key updates</b></p> <p>a. Report</p> <p>The report was presented by the Committee Chair and no questions were raised.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Finance Committee Report and Key Updates</b></p> <p>a. Report</p> <p>The Chair of Finance presented the report and congratulated Deputy Principal Finance and the Finance Team on achieving such a strong financial position for the College. He went on to highlight that the College is in the strongest position at this point in the academic year.</p> <p>Governors questioned management on how the transition to the new banks was progressing and if there was a transition date. [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Corporation Chair confirmed that the tender process for new external auditors had completed and that Bishop Fleming had been appointed. He added that Bishop Fleming were already working with the College and had attended the Sustainability breakfast earlier in the day.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>CPWG</b></p> <p>a. Report and key updates</p> <p>The key points of the report were presented by the Committee Chair. The points covered were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work being carried out at Knightstone Campus for IoT Digital and the IoT Electrical Vehicle and Welding at South West Skills Campus.</li> <li>• Feasibility study for the Lauriston Hotel.</li> <li>• Work to divide the Winter Gardens into 4 zones allowing the commercial areas to operate independently of College management.</li> </ul> <p>Governors thanked the Principal and staff for the work that had taken place so far on all of the projects. Governors requested an update on progress at the next finance Committee.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Deputy Principal Finance to bring further update to the next Finance Committee.</p>

	<p>A Governor questioned management around the events side of the Winter Gardens looking at how the College planned to operate the commercial spaces. Management responded that one opportunity being considered would be use a franchise model.</p>
10.	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
11.	<p><b>Agility - Current approaches</b></p> <p>The Principal gave a verbal update to Corporation members on the work being tackled by the Agility Group. He confirmed that still one of his main priorities was to increase the attendance figures and to complete learners from the last academic year.</p> <p>Other areas being focused on were reported as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance and Quality</li><li>• Bootcamps</li></ul> <p>The Principal was able to confirm that Ofsted had now confirmed that they would not be inspecting bootcamps. Both Governors and management were pleased with this information.</p>
12.	<p><b>Safeguarding and PREVENT</b></p> <p>The lead Governor for safeguarding informed the Governing Body that the regular safeguarding meeting would take place in the following week but was able to confirm the new reporting system was now beginning to show trends.</p> <p>Referrals between March and April were in line with previous months and academic years with one anomaly noted that was the referral of 4 separate instances of physical abuse all in the same week prior to Easter.</p> <p>Members noted that since the last Corporation meeting 2 staff safeguarding training sessions have taken place with 29 staff attending.</p> <p>The Principal informed members that he had met with members of Avon and Somerset Police earlier in the week regarding a joint summit in October on domestic violence. All members noted that domestic violence was an increasing problem.</p>
13.	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>



	<p>An update on T levels and their placement in the apprenticeship agenda had been requested by a Governor at a previous meeting. The Principal gave a detailed update on the T-levels and apprenticeship agenda. The apprenticeship Governor gave the employer perspective in trying to engage with employers. It identified that apprentices in the workplace need to be given a central department that looks after students within their workplaces.</p>
17.	<p><b>AoB</b></p> <p>There were no further items of business and the meeting closed at 6.50pm.</p>