

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 March 2014

Membership:	* P Taylor (Chair)	* M Coleman	* D Palmer
	R Abela	M Denny	* M Prodger
	N Allen	* N Garala	* B Spencer
	* P Bartlett	E Johnson	* K Spencer
	J Breen	* R Locke	* M Thorne
	* C Christofides	* L Mager	* P Whitehead

* denotes present

In attendance: P Marsh, Vice-Principal
L Turner, Vice-Principal
W Allanson, Exec Director Business Development (item 1753 only)
C Berkins, Director of Quality (item 1753 only)
M McKeaveney, UTC Principal (item 1754 only)
D Morgan, Director of Financial Planning and Strategy
D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation
R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation

1746 Apologies for absence and a welcome

Apologies for absence were received from Riccardo Abela, Neil Allen, Jo Breen, Michelle Denny, Eddie Johnson and Mike Stokes, Vice-Principal.

Paul Taylor welcomed Louise Turner to the meeting. Louise Turner introduced herself, informing governors that she has taken up the post of Vice Principal - Learning and Improvement, with a focus on e-learning, enterprise and enrichment.

The Clerk informed Governors that the meeting was being held in Building K, one of the buildings used for teaching that was rated in a property survey as 'poor accommodation'. The meeting would end with a tour of the campus so that Governors could view the areas requiring refurbishment or replacement.

1747 Declarations of Interest

Paul Whitehead declared an interest in agenda item 1753 – Apprenticeship Improvement Plan. There were no other declarations of interest.

1748 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Corporation approved the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2013 as a true and accurate record and they were signed by the Chair.

1749 Matters Arising from the Minutes

1749.1 Amendments to the Instruments and Articles of Government (minute 1740 refers)

The Clerk confirmed that she is continuing to work with Eversheds on amending the College's Instrument and Articles of Government.

1749.2 Matthew Hancock MP Visit (minute 1742.1 refers)

This visit was postponed. A new date is being sought from the Minister.

1750 Probationary Period of the Principal – Confidential Item

The Corporation received and considered the report of Paul Taylor, Chair of the Corporation, on the probationary period of the Principal.

Staff and student governors withdrew from the meeting.

A detailed discussion was held by governors and the Corporation unanimously endorsed the appointment of Karen Spencer as Principal following the successful completion of her probationary period.

1751 Governor Training and Development

1751.1 To report on recent training development events and contacts with the Executive and Pair Scheme

The Corporation received an update on the Pair Scheme from the Deputy Clerk.

Governors reported the following:

Robert Locke has met with his pair student in Visual Arts and is arranging a follow up visit. YCT is continuing its partnership arrangements with the College.

Brian Spencer has met with his HE pair student.

Luci Mager has had a successful meeting with her Hospitality pair student.

Karen Spencer has spent a day teaching in the Building Services department as part of the Executive's "Back to the Floor" initiative.

Paul Bartlett has met his Vocational IT pair student, is meeting his second student (a HE student) on 21 March and attended the annual hairdressing competition.

Myrtle Prodger attended the Safeguarding Committee and is renewing her safeguarding training, attended the Health and Safety Committee, attended the open evening, has had a second visit with her Painting and Decorating pair student and has met with an electrical apprentice.

Mike Thorne has been involved in a number of UTC meetings, hosted a visit from K Spencer at ARU and has a date in the diary to meet his Performing Arts pair student.

Nishall Garala attended the Safeguarding Committee and the open evening, met with his A-Levels pair student and attended the Beacon Award presentation in Westminster.

Debbie Palmer reported on her visit to College to meet her Performing Arts pair student, which was not successful. A discussion was held around the

issues and it was agreed that revised procedures and protocols with delivery staff will be adopted to avoid such a situation arising again.

Martin Coleman has met with his Engineering pair student.

Paul Taylor has attended the open evening and UTC meetings.

1751.2 To receive an update on recent Student Ambassador activities

The Corporation received an update on recent Student Ambassador activities from Nishall Garala.

The Student Ambassadors have been involved in: all open evenings; recruitment of the College Chaplain; recruitment of the UTC Principal; the Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity meetings; Essex County Council's consultation on Youth Services cuts; the Inter-Faith Forum; promotion of the Student Satisfaction Survey; charity events; setting up the basketball team; seeking students for a STEM project; the AoC Beacon Award presentation; design of the College prospectus and minibus and the "O Zone" – the new student area.

Karen Spencer informed the Corporation that Nishall has been shortlisted for a national V Inspire award for bringing communities together after winning a regional award.

1752 Principal's Report

The Corporation received and considered the Principal's Report presented by Karen Spencer.

The Principal talked through the curriculum and development priorities and the reshaping of the senior team structure in detail and how the College is looking to maximise progression into the higher education offer here at the College and at ARU. Internal priorities were also talked through.

The priorities were discussed in detail and governors noted the following:

- The College will look at its 14 – 16 offer once the UTC is successfully open and running.
- Karen Spencer has been invited to attend the next meeting of the secondary school headteachers in Harlow.
- Whilst there is an appetite to invest in the campus, it is critical that quality remains the focus of staff.
- Appointments have been made to the two newly created Assistant Principal posts and the College is investing resources into areas where it can diversify its income and strengthen its offer.
- There has been a sector-wide 15% cut in the Adult Single Budget funding for 2014/15 which equates to approximately £600,000.
- There could be the opportunity to bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership for alternative sources of funding.
- Positive relationships are being developed with the hospital that is looking to recruit approximately 30 apprentices.
- There is potential to work in partnership with NHS England.
- The Aspire Academy is being established for young people in Harlow for whom the school system does not work. The Academy is being set up by

Harlow Education Consortium, Passmores and Stewards and a member of the Harlow College's Executive Team will sit on its governing body.

- The services provided by Harlow Education Consortium were not tailored to an FE college's needs, however the College will still be involved with discussions around education.

The Corporation noted the Principal's Report and approved the curriculum and development priorities presented.

1753 Apprenticeship Improvement Plan

The Corporation received and considered the report on the Apprenticeship Improvement Plan presented by Paul Marsh, Vice-Principal, Will Allanson, Executive Director Business Development and Chris Berkins, Director of Quality.

The College was visited by Derek Baughan HMI from Ofsted, in January because although the College has been performing well there has been a three-year declining trend in apprenticeship success rates. Four other colleges in Essex were also visited. The College will have a follow-up visit from the HMI in April and it will be crucial that the College can demonstrate the steps that have been taken to ensure improvements.

A Quality Improvement Plan for apprenticeships has been produced and Mr Baughan has fed back on it, confirming that it is a good plan and that there are no omissions. The return visit will test out the plan.

Governors were updated on how the College now monitors performance across the College and its partners and on interventions that have been put into place to ensure improvements are delivered. An electronic reporting and record-keeping system is being implemented that will improve monitoring and make the process more transparent.

The predicted timely success rates for 2013/14 were discussed in detail and it was confirmed that improved figures will be reported at the April visit.

The Corporation noted the report on the Apprenticeship Improvement Plan.

1754 Sir Charles Kao University Technical College

Paul Taylor welcomed and introduced Mike McKeaveney to the meeting and highlighted the College and Anglia Ruskin University's commitment to the UTC. The Corporation then received and considered the report on the development of the University Technical College (UTC) presented by Mike McKeaveney, UTC Principal.

Governors received an update on the following:

- Applications received, offers made and formal acceptances to date;
- The new building;
- The curriculum;
- The UTC's expectations of students; culture, ethos and conduct;
- Work experience / internship opportunities;
- Monitoring arrangements.

Governors were given the opportunity to ask questions and Mike Thorne, as Chair of the UTC Project Steering group, reported that most UTCs struggle with student recruitment, however the Sir Charles Kao UTC has very positive student numbers, thanks to the work of M McKeaveney and his team.

The Corporation noted the report on the development of the UTC.

1755 Management Accounts for the Period 1 August 2013 – 31 January 2014 Including Proposed Adjustments to the Current College Budget

The Corporation received and considered the Management Accounts for 1 August – 31 January 2014 presented by K Spencer, Principal.

A discussion was held around the management accounts and Governors noted the following:

- An additional page has been included to show pay cost comparisons for this financial year compared to last financial year.
- There has been in a drop in Executive staff costs from 9.4% last financial year to 8.1% this financial year as predicted.
- The College is working with ARU to resolve issues with higher education income and the validation fees.
- The College has received confirmation from the Skills Funding Agency that the College's financial health rating has been re-rated to good (from satisfactory) for 2012/13.
- The percentage of creditors paid within 30 days is low, however this will be addressed through a new finance system which will speed up a wide set of internal processes.
- A review of the MIS system is also being undertaken.

The Corporation noted and approved the management accounts up to 31 January 2014.

1756 Review of Loans and Property Strategy

The Corporation received and considered the report of Paul Marsh, Vice-Principal, on the review of loans and the Property Strategy.

The College currently spends £1.1m on its estate and £100k hiring off-site facilities per annum. There is a clear need to develop a Property Strategy and a fit for purpose campus. A condition survey, undertaken in 2012, indicated 57% of the College accommodation was graded satisfactory (grade B) and 43% poor (grade C). A curriculum review is being undertaken which needs to be in line with the campus and accommodation review.

There is an opportunity to of take out an additional loan to address the needs of the campus, however the College would not want to take on an unsustainable burden of debt.

A discussion was held around the Property Strategy and the Principal informed governors of the opportunity to develop an advanced manufacturing centre on the campus to meet the needs of the College and local employers.

The Corporation noted the Property Strategy, noted the existing loan positions and recommended that the Banking Working Group reconvenes to review investment in the campus.

1757 Campus Tour

(This item was deferred to the end of the meeting.)

Governors were taken on a tour of the College, with particular attention being paid to those parts of the campus most in need of investment.

1758 Reports from Committees

1758.1 Search and Governance Committee – 4 February 2014

The Corporation received the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meetings held on 4 February 2014.

1758.2 Standards Committee – 13 March 2014

The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 13 March 2014 will be presented at the next Corporation meeting.

1758.3 Resources Committee – 25 February 2014

The Corporation received the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 25 February 2014.

1758.4 Audit Committee – 4 December 2013 & 4 March 2014

The Corporation received the minutes of the Audit Committee meetings held on 4 December 2013 and 4 March 2014.

Paul Bartlett reported on Baker Tilly's internal audit services and their conflict of interests since Baker Tilly acquired RSM Tenon.

Following on from discussions and the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Corporation agreed to go out tender for its internal audit services.

1759 Any Other Business

The Principal updated the Corporation on the work that is being undertaken to review contracts which the College holds. The main aim of the review was to achieve better quality and value for money.

Following on from discussions, the Corporation agreed the strategy and process to go forward as presented.

1760 Dates of future meetings

Summer Term	Thursday 15 May 2014	08.30am
	Thursday 03 July 2014	08.30am