

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at Harlow College on Thursday 19 December 2024 – 9.30am

Membership:	*Paul Taylor (Chair)	*Arthur Hall-Jackson	*Lily Lin
	Caroline Betts	*Bronte Humphrey	*Karen Spencer
	*Rod Bristow	*Stephen Isherwood	*Michael Travers
	*Julia Fillary	*Ayub Khan	*Ed Whittle
	*Vic Goddard	*Ray Levy	*Heather Wilson
	*John Godley		

* denotes present

In attendance: Will Allanson, Deputy Principal
Paul Whitehead, Vice-Principal
Becky Jones, Vice-Principal
Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance
Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal
Natalie Smith, Head of HR Services and Employee Relations
Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance

The meeting commenced with a minute's silence in memory of Liz Laycock.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Caroline Betts due to work commitments.

2 Declaration of Interests

Michael Travers declared an interest in agenda item 12 – Health and Safety Reports as he is the College's Health, Safety and Estates Manager and contributed to the Health and Safety Annual Report. This will now be noted as a permanent interest for any Health and Safety related items.

There were no other new, additional declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes and the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2024 were approved by the Corporation as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising

4.1 Matters Arising (minute 4 refers) – Confidential Corporation Minutes

Paul Whitehead reported that there has been no update from the ESFA on the College's car leasing scheme and the College has been waiting to hear back from the ESFA for almost a year.

Deanne Morgan reported that the academy sector has been informed that no new starts on such schemes are permitted however there has been no communication with the FE sector.

The Corporation agreed that the scheme is not novel or contentious and noted that the Civil Service operates a similar scheme.

The Corporation unanimously agreed to restart the scheme after Christmas as per the decision made at the Corporation meeting on 24 October 2024.

6 Student Governor Update

The Corporation received and considered the Student Governor Update, presented by Arthur Hall-Jackson and Bronte Humphrey, Student Governors.

Bronte Humphrey reported that they had attended a Learner Voice conference and enrichment activities based on the environment and sustainability. Karen Spencer reported that there has been positive feedback from principals across Essex on the conference and more mini conferences are being planned.

Arthur Hall-Jackson reported that there is an issue with the amount of bursary funding given to eligible students and the increase in the cost of food. This is partly due to students not updating their timetables with the bursary team. Arthur Hall-Jackson also reported that there are concerns about the food choices on offer.

Paul Whitehead reported that he has met with the catering team and reviews are being undertaken, part of which will include surveying students. The catering team are also looking at whether changing suppliers would reduce costs. The Bursary Policy is reviewed annually and approved by the Resources Committee. The College has a fixed amount of funding from Government for bursary and the amount does not cover the full cost of the service, therefore the College has to contribute significantly to the operating costs of the catering service.

Karen Spencer reported that there is a challenge at STAC due to its location as it is not easy to access any other food provision other than that provided on site. Previous student feedback on the range of food led to the introduction of healthier choices but there was subsequently less take up of the healthier options available and more food waste. Will Allanson reported that healthier options were placed in the vending machines however they were not being purchased. A more robust survey with students will be undertaken.

Arthur Hall-Jackson reported that he is part of a student group looking at the expansion of STAC.

The Corporation noted the Student Governor Update.

6 Principal's Report

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

Karen Spencer reported that a memorandum of understanding has been signed with Princess Alexandra Hospital to look at progressing an NHS academy which will consolidate the College's health sciences provision. A meeting is being set up for the new year with the new Chief Executive of the hospital. A working group has been established with leaders from the local trust which will focus on shaping curriculum needs to meet local needs. A potential new Governor within the sector has been approached which addresses one of the recommendations made within the External Governance Review. This will be progressed by the Search and Governance Committee.

A Governor asked if the curriculum offer of the NHS academy has been discussed. Will Allanson reported that this is being explored with the working group, starting with clinical roles, then moving onto support roles. The intention is to establish a pipeline of work-ready employees. There is a challenge with Level 4 and 5 qualifications as the universities have a stranglehold on the qualifications. The levels the College would be offering would be at advanced practitioner level and below.

A Governor highlighted that some universities are not that interested in Level 5 as the margins are not there. Karen Spencer reported that they often push students onto Level 6. The College was previously successful in recruiting good numbers to its higher education provision however once the student number cap and linked validation agreements were removed, the College saw a significant drop in HE learners.

A Governor asked where the NHS academy would be located. Will Allanson reported that it is likely to be on the College campus, as this would be the best location for students.

Karen Spencer reported that a meeting has been held with the Leader of Essex County Council to discuss phase 2 of STAC. The Council is keen to look at how it can support this in conjunction with the airport's expansion plans. They are looking at inward investment opportunities to secure the funding required. An internal Council working group has been established looking at inward investment and skills.

The College is working collaboratively with the City of Bristol College and Newark College and is looking to partner with the City of Bristol College to establish a satellite centre of its 147 licencing centre at Stansted. STAC phase 2 will include establishing its own 147 centre.

Governors were informed that development works in Hertfordshire are unlikely to start until 2027 therefore the College is in discussion with the CITB to relocate the construction hub from the site earmarked for the Health Security Agency to the Harlow College campus. Further developments on this will be reported to the Resources Committee through the Property Strategy.

The College is integrating the UN's sustainable development goals into its curriculum and is now expanding the Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Centre to cover heavy goods vehicles.

A review of the campus has been undertaken and proposals for LED lighting and heating solutions are being explored.

Governors noted that the HR Strategy will be monitored by the Resources Committee.

The Corporation noted the Principal's Report.

7 Quality and Curriculum Reports

7.1 Minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee Meeting – 27 November 2024

7.1.1 To note the minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 27 November 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 27 November 2024.

7.1.2 To note the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2023-2024 and agree the Key Performance Indicators for 2024-2025.

The Corporation received and considered the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2023-2024 and the proposed key Performance Indicators for 2024-2025.

Becky Jones reported that three-year targets had been set and that some of the 2024-2025 targets have been reviewed and revised as in most cases, the College outperformed the target set for 2023-2024.

A Governor asked if there was any rationale for the KPIs which had exceeded the 2023-2024 target however the 2024-2025 target had not been revised accordingly. Becky Jones agreed that these will be relooked at and any revisions will be shared with the Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Committee for approval.

The Corporation noted the final position of the Key Performance Indicators for 2023-2024 and approved the Key Performance Indicators for 2024-2025 subject to the review as detailed above.

7.2 Self-Assessment Report 2023-2024, including performance for 2022-2023

The Corporation received and considered the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2023-2024, presented by Becky Jones, Vice-Principal.

Becky Jones reported that the Self-Assessment Report comprises the individual Self-Assessment Reports which were presented to the Standards and Curriculum Committee, along with a strategic summary, the College's recent Ofsted report and data tables.

Governors were informed that all key actions from the individual Self-Assessment Reports have been incorporated into the Quality Improvement Plan for 2024-2025 and cross referenced to the KPIs.

Governors were thanked for taking part in the self-assessment event on 27 November 2024.

The Corporation approved the Self-Assessment Report 2023-2024.

7.3 Quality Improvement Plan 2024-2025

The Corporation received and considered the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2024-2025, presented by Becky Jones, Vice-Principal.

Governors were informed that members of the College's Executive take ownership of the key actions for their area and their KPIs. Progress against the QIP and KPIs are then reported into the relevant Committees and Corporation.

The Corporation approved the Quality Improvement Plan 2024-2025.

8 Search and Governance Committee Reports

8.1 Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee Meeting – 26 November 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 26 November 2024.

8.2 Link Governors

The Corporation unanimously agreed to appoint Vic Goddard as the Lead Governor for safeguarding and SEND.

8.3 Self-Assessment of Governance 2023-2024

The Corporation received and considered the Self-Assessment of Governance 2023-2024, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Ruth Lucas informed the Corporation that there is no requirement to have a Self-Assessment of Governance for 2023-2024 as the External Governance Review was undertaken that year however a shorter version of the Self-Assessment provides the Corporation with some useful metrics.

Governors were informed that the Self-Assessment of Governance had been considered in detailed at the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 26 November 2024 and that the Committee recommends its approval to the Corporation.

The Corporation approved the Self-Assessment of Governance 2023-2024.

8.4 Governance KPIs 2024 – 2025 and Improvement Plan

The Corporation received and considered the Governance KPIs 2024 – 2025 and Improvement Plan presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Ruth Lucas informed the Corporation that the Improvement Plan had been developed from the External Governance Review and the mapping of compliance against the AoC's Further Education Code of Good Governance.

Governors were informed that the Governance KPIs 2024 – 2025 and Improvement Plan had been considered in detailed at the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 26 November 2024 and that the Committee recommends its approval to the Corporation.

The Corporation approved the Governance KPIs 2024 – 2025 and Improvement Plan.

9 Audit, Finance and Resources Reports

9.1 Audit Committee Reports

9.1.1 Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting – 9 December 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes and the confidential minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 9 December 2024.

9.1.2 To receive and approve the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2024

The Corporation received and considered the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2024.

Deanne Morgan reported that the report is the internal auditors overview and opinion for the year ended 31 July 2024. Governors were informed that the report had been considered at the Audit Committee meeting held on 15 October 2024. Whilst the report is prepared by the internal auditors, managers and Governors are able to challenge the content if necessary.

A Governor asked how the current programme of internal audit is linked to the College's risk register. Deanne Morgan reported that early conversations take place with management and the auditors on the proposed audit programme for the following year which is based on the College's current risk register and any emerging risks in the sector. In addition, previous audit coverage will be used to help determine the audit programme. Karen Spencer reported that the biggest risks faced by the College are those beyond the College's control, such as funding, finances and curriculum. The College is very prudent with its business planning and does not spend funding until it has been earned. A pragmatic approach is taken by the College around curriculum change and the College, where possible, is fleet of foot.

Karen Spencer reported that the previous Government announced the defunding of a wide range of qualifications. When Labour came into power, they announced a “pause and review” of the defunding. The review report was published last week and the College is currently working through what it believes its position will be in light on this. There has been some recognition that T-Levels are not the most appropriate qualification in some areas therefore existing qualifications will remain in the short-term. There is likely to be further change on this. Karen Spencer reported it will not have a big impact on the College at present.

A Governor reported that it is positive that the College can offer potential students more certainty over its curriculum offer for September 2025.

Paul Whitehead reported that there is a balance with the impact on student numbers and financial planning and the recent published report will allow the College to manage this in a smoother way.

Becky Jones reported that she has no concerns over what is contained in the report however the College has had to project its T-Level numbers and these numbers will now change however it is unclear how colleges will be able to correct the figures with the DfE. Karen Spencer reported that it is anticipated that there will be a survey on T-Level numbers in February / March 2025. Paul Whitehead reported that T-Level numbers and associated funding is separated out in the management accounts and the College only reconciles this funding based on actual, rather than predicted, student numbers.

The Corporation approved the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service for the year ended 31 July 2024.

9.1.3 To receive and approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee

The Corporation received and considered the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for the period 01 August 2023 to 31 July 2024, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Governors were informed that this annual report needs to be agreed by the Corporation and forms part of the statutory documents which need to be submitted to the Education Skills Funding Agency.

Governors were informed that the report had been reviewed in detail by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 9 December 2024.

The Corporation noted and agreed the following opinion of the Audit Committee

“It is the opinion of the Audit Committee, based on the reports it has received and considered, and drawing upon the knowledge and expertise of its members and its audit services, supported by the work

and views of College management, that during 2023-24 Harlow College:

- *had adequate and effective assurance arrangements;*
- *had an adequate and effective framework of governance;*
- *had adequate and effective risk management and control processes for the effective and efficient use of resources, solvency of the College and the safeguarding of its assets;*
- *had adequate arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness;*
- *had adequate and effective key internal controls;*
- *had adequate and effective arrangements for data quality;*
- *had, overall, systems and controls that are adequate and effective for carrying forward the objectives of the College.*

The Audit Committee met in private with the internal and external auditors on 3 July 2024 and 9 December 2024 and no issues impacting upon matters of internal control were raised. Buzzacott did not identify any matters of material irregularity throughout their audit work to bring to the attention of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee considers that it operated effectively in 2023-2024 and that it met its terms of reference and the requirements of the Audit Code of Practice.”

The Corporation approved the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2023 – 2024 and agreed for it to be signed by Ray Levy, Chair of the Audit Committee.

9.1.4 To receive the recommendation of the Audit Committee on the appointment of the College’s external auditors

The Corporation received and considered the report on the appointment of the College’s external auditors, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that the Audit Committee recommends the reappointment of Buzzacott as the College’s external auditors for a further year.

The Corporation was informed that during the recently completed audit there had been a change of audit manager between the audit planning meeting and the start of the audit. The audit manager was experienced in the not-for-profit sector rather than the FE sector therefore additional work and clarifications were required throughout the audit however they

were professional throughout. Governors were informed that the College still has the same audit partner and the relationship is positive.

Deanne Morgan reported that external auditors can be appointed for up to five years therefore this time next year, the College will need to go out to tender.

A Governor asked about how the College evaluates the performance of the auditors and if there were any concerns around familiarity. Deanne Morgan reported that the requirement to tender every five years address this and if the same audit firm is reappointed, a change in audit manager is required. Karen Spencer reported that previous auditors have reported that it is good to have a change however there are a limited number of firms operating in the sector. Part of the tender process would be to evaluate the performance of auditors. A Governor reported it was good to have change however managed change is best.

The Corporation thanked Deanne and her team for their hard work with the audit.

The Corporation unanimously agreed to appoint Buzzacott as the College's external auditors for 2024/25.

9.1.5 To receive the recommendation of the Audit Committee on the appointment of the College's internal auditors

The Corporation received and considered the report on the appointment of the College's internal auditors, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that the Audit Committee recommends the reappointment of Scrutton Bland as the College's internal auditors for a further year.

The Corporation unanimously agreed to appoint Scrutton Bland as the College's internal auditors for 2025/26.

9.2 Joint Audit and Resources Committee Reports

9.2.1 Minutes of the joint Audit and Resources Committee Meeting – 9 December 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the joint Audit and Resources Committee meeting held on 9 December 2024.

9.2.2 To receive and approve the Post-Audit Management Report for the period to 31 July 2024 and the Letter of Representation

The Corporation received and considered the Post-Audit Management Report for the period to 31 July 2024 and the Letter of Representation, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that the Post-Audit Management Report was considered in detail by the joint Audit and Resources Committee at its meeting held on 9 December 2024 and by management.

Governors were informed that the Post-Audit Management Report will be amended to remove the outstanding items and Governors noted that no significant events have taken place since the audit.

A Governor reported that the comparison data included in the Post-Audit Management Report was useful and Deanne Morgan reported that Buzzacott are one of the top firms in the region operating in the sector.

The Corporation reviewed the Letter of Representation.

The Corporation approved the Post-Audit Management Report for the period to 31 July 2024 and the Letter of Representation for the year ended 31 July 2024 and agreed for the Letter of Representation to be signed by the Chair and Accounting Officer.

9.2.3 To receive and approve the Annual Report 2023-2024 and to receive and approve the Financial Statements 2023-2024

The Corporation received and considered the Annual Report 2023-2024 and to receive and approve the Financial Statements 2023-2024, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

The Corporation was informed that both documents were considered in detail at the Joint Audit and Resources Committee meeting held on 9 December 2024.

The Corporation approved the Annual Report 2023-2024 and the Financial Statements 2023-2024 and agreed that they should be signed by the Chair and the Principal and sent to the Education Skills Funding Agency.

9.3 Resources Committee Reports

9.3.1 Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting – 9 December 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 9 December 2024.

9.3.2 ESFA Financial Health Rating Letter and Governing Body Finance Dashboard

The Corporation received and considered the ESFA financial health rating letter and Governing Body finance dashboard.

Governors noted that the letter is a standard letter which is issued by the ESFA annually and confirms what Governors are being told by management.

The Corporation noted the ESFA financial health rating letter and the Governing Body finance dashboard.

9.3.3 Management Accounts for the period 1 August 2024 – 31 October 2024

The Corporation received and considered the management accounts for the period 1 August 2024 – 31 October 2024, presented by Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance.

Governors were informed that the management accounts were considered in detail by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 6 December 2024.

Governors noted that the main question at the Resources Committee was around the College's use and cost of agency staff. Paul Whitehead reported that a meeting was held on 18 December 2024 to finalise the November management accounts and that agency costs are now in line with the target set. Some agency staff have been made permanent and the number of agency staff are reducing. Management are confident that at the current level of agency staff, the target will be met. A Governor asked if this change had happened in the last month and a half and Paul Whitehead reported that this was the case. The November accounts have been reforecast and some members of staff have been made permanent since the October management accounts were produced. Governors noted that there are one-offs the College has to pay the agency when it recruits a member of agency staff permanently however this is a worthwhile investment and a one-off cost rather than an ongoing cost. Karen Spencer reported that the issue is largely due to the growth in student numbers, which the College has had for the last two years, which is not fully funded in-year.

Paul Whitehead also reported that a number of the College's Learning Support Practitioners (LSPs) have secured internal promotions therefore a lot of the agency fees were for LSPs, the majority of which are now permanent members of staff.

A Governor asked about T-Levels funding being slightly behind, what the expectation for growth over time is and if this creates any pressure.

Paul Whitehead reported that the figures are based on the numbers the College thought it would recruit. T-Levels are bigger programmes than the standard 16-18 Study Programmes and cost more to deliver and resource. This poses challenges from a resources point of view and has a higher staff cost to income ratio. There is a need to balance the curriculum to meet the needs of the community.

Karen Spencer reported that T-Level numbers in electrical and plumbing were low in the financial plan. The College has since not delivered these T-Levels as there is a better City and Guilds

qualification however the College had to cap student numbers due to the difficulties in recruiting staff.

Becky Jones reported that the College will review each pathway and sector to ensure that the pathway is the right one for the College's students. The College will move over to T-Levels in digital and business however in other areas where there could be some potential issues or difficulties, the College will not introduce these T-Levels yet.

Karen Spencer reported that the curriculum review will make some comment about how T-Levels should be changed, therefore it is a waiting game for decisions to be made by Government.

The Corporation approved the management accounts for the period 1 August 2024 – 31 October 2024.

9.3.4 Human Resources Strategy 2025 – 2030

The Corporation received and considered the Human Resources Strategy 2025 – 2030, presented by Natalie Smith, Head of HR and Employee Relations.

The Corporation was informed that the Strategy was considered in detail at the Resources Committee meeting held on 9 December 2024 and that the Resources Committee recommends its approval to the Corporation.

Natalie Smith reported that the Strategy aligns to the College's Strategic Plan and outlines the six key priority areas over the next five years, with a key focus being recruitment of staff. The Strategy also details the College's current position, objectives and KPIs.

A Governor thanked Natalie Smith for the Strategy and commented it was a very good document. He asked whether there was funding in the budget to cover the cost of delivering the Strategy and the training elements included in it and asked what the staff feedback on the Strategy was.

Natalie Smith reported that staff have not been asked for feedback on the Strategy however there is overwhelmingly positive feedback on policies from new and existing staff and from the staff survey. Karen Spencer reported that a staff survey is undertaken every two years and this, along with the work on Investors in Diversity and the feedback from various established focus and support groups and the Unions, goes into informing the Strategy. Natalie Smith reported CPD is delivered through staff development days led by the College's Quality Team and that training is undertaken in house with some external training provided by specialist providers.

Paul Whitehead reported that there are budgets associated with all the elements of the Strategy. The College has a significant teacher training programme and advanced practitioner programme to support new

teachers in the classroom. There is also a CPD budget for specific training at team and individual level.

A Governor reported that in her interactions with the College, all teachers, managers and leaders care about the students and provide high quality teaching, learning and assessment. The College has the resources, support and systems in place to enable them to do the job to a high standard.

The Corporation approved the Human Resources Strategy 2025 – 2030.

10 Safeguarding Reports

10.1 Minutes of the Safeguarding Committee Meeting – 28 November 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Safeguarding Committee meeting held on 28 November 2024.

10.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2023-2024

The Corporation received and considered the Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2023-2024, presented by Sallyann Abdelmoula, Assistant Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that there is a continued focus on reducing the achievement gap for Children in Care (CIC) and bursary students. Whilst this has reduced, there is still work to be done.

Sallyann Abdelmoula is working with social services to make transitions better however there is still an issue when students are moved out of the area when they turn 18.

Governors noted that the Prevent threat level remains substantial and Sallyann Abdelmoula regularly attends termly meetings with higher and further education safeguarding leads.

The College monitors the use of Wi-Fi and raises any concerns about sites being accessed, taking appropriate action where required.

A Governor asked about the increase in the number of stop and searches carried out. Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that, for example, if cannabis can be smelt, it is not always possible to identify who has smoked it therefore a search on a class group of students is undertaken. Will Allanson also reported that there had been a couple of incidents with safeguarding risks therefore whole groups of learners were searched. It was agreed that this is a suitably cautious approach taken by the College. A Governor reported that it would be useful to see the figures as a percentage of the student population which would highlight proportionality.

A Governor asked about the increase in criminal conviction risk assessments. Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that these mainly relate to adults recruited onto short programmes. Adult enrolment now takes place online therefore those with a criminal conviction are picked up earlier in the process now. Work is being undertaken with the adult team to ensure appropriate information, advice and guidance is being given to these individuals. It was agreed that the figures should be spilt out for adults and for 16-18 and to add in percentages to demonstrate proportionality. It was noted that the Corporation and College's duty is for vulnerable children and there is a clear differential between children and adult learners.

It was agreed that Fitness to Study data should be included in future reports for completeness.

A Governor asked about the youth workers and if the College had good quality youth work from outside agencies. Sallyann Abdelmoula reported the youth workers are internal staff who were appointed this year. There is a lot of talk about youth work from outside agencies however resource is often limited and often subject to securing additional funding. There is very little to refer to in external agencies.

A Governor asked if there is a specific training programme for the youth workers. Sallyann Abdelmoula reported not as yet however there are existing staff who were appointed to the youth worker role in September 2024. A visit to another college has taken place to look at their practice and what could be implemented here at Harlow College. The College's own staff have a good approach with students and know how to engage with them in a positive way. There has been a decline in behaviour challenges this academic year and there is good subjective feedback being received from the students. Staff are positively welcoming students onto campus and into class every day and this is making a difference. People report they feel safe and welcomed on site.

A Governor asked about the school files, what percentage had been received and whether there is anything that can be done with other secondary schools to help address the issues. Sallyann Abdelmoula reported that the College will never know the number it is expecting as it relies on the schools to provide the information to the College on safeguarded learners who will be attending the College. Paul Whitehead reported that a lot of work needs to be done and that he is working with Essex County Council around transition and improvements are needed. A Governor said he was able to raise the profile of the importance of this with local headteachers and this and other issues raised will be picked up outside of this meeting. ***Post-Meeting Note: the Governor has confirmed that issues raised in the meeting were from approximately ten years or longer ago and that there are no issues being reported by the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead at present.***

Karen Spencer reported that there is a gap in the system nationally that needs to be addressed. For transition from primary to secondary school, all files are transferred, however for post-16 the secondary school decides which students are "safeguarded" and transfers only relevant files. Historically, a Governor highlighted that the Connexions service would have had responsibility for

tracking vulnerable students in this transition period. There is now no clear system for this tracking and oversight.

A Governor asked about the food bank referrals, if there was anything CAB Harlow could support with and agreed to have a conversation outside of this meeting with Sallyann Abdelmoula

The Corporation noted the Keeping Children Safe in Education Report 2023-2024.

11 Equality and Diversity Reports

11.1 Minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee Meeting – 19 November 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee meeting held on 19 November 2024.

11.2 Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2023-2024 and Objectives

The Corporation received and considered the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2021-2022 and Objectives, presented by Paul Whitehead, Vice-Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Paul Whitehead reported that all the student data in this report has come from the Standards and Curriculum Committee reports and the Self-Assessment Report, with the staff data being provided by HR.

Paul Whitehead highlighted the Investors in Diversity work, the Equality and Diversity Ambassadors and the key focus groups that will take forward this agenda.

The Corporation approved the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2023-2024 and Objectives.

12 Health and Safety Reports

12.1 Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting – 26 November 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 26 November 2024.

12.2 Health and Safety Annual Report 2023-2024

The Corporation received and considered the Health and Safety Annual Report 2023-2024, presented by Will Allanson, Deputy Principal.

The report was taken as read.

Will Allanson reported that the report provides Governors with assurance on how the College is meeting its legislative duties.

Governors' attention was brought to the performance targets which have been included for the report, which details last year's targets as well as targets going forward.

Governors were informed that the Smartlog system has now been fully embedded and is working well.

The Corporation approved the Health and Safety Annual Report 2023-2024 and confirmed that the College is compliant with statutory and legislative requirements.

13 Stansted Airport College Advisory Group – 06 December 2024

The Corporation received and noted the minutes of the Stansted Airport Advisory Group meeting held on 06 December 2024.

Governors were informed that Robert Halfon is now the Chair of the STAC Advisory Group.

Karen Spencer reported that at the meeting, students spoke excellently about their experiences at STAC.

The Corporation thanked MAG for their continued support for the pilot enrichment programme.

A Governor asked if the sim is working and Will Allanson confirmed it was. Arthur Hall-Jackson reported that they have seen it in place but not seen it working. It was agreed that this would be followed up by Will Allanson.

14 Correspondence

14.1 Letter from The Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith Minister for Skills, dated 8 November 2024

The Corporation received and considered the Letter from The Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith Minister for Skills, dated 8 November 2024.

Karen Spencer reported that there has been no further detail on the additional funding which has been announced for the sector and it is likely that the £300m will just cover growth funding. It is not likely that there will be much capital funding and the parameters around this are not yet known. The AoC was not expecting any funding going into FE so these announcements were welcomed.

A Governor highlighted that the additional funding is only a fraction of what is actually needed.

Paul Whitehead reported that the College's SEND funding has increased significantly this year as the number of SEND students has increased. Essex

County Council is reviewing the mechanism for funding and initial draft figures from the new banding system would indicate the College would have a slight increase in its funding. Feedback from Ofsted was that the College makes a significant difference to learners with high needs. The College has an additional 40 – 50 learners with high needs this year and the College is using the funds as best as it can to support each learner. This remains a key priority for the College.

A Governor asked what the College spends the high needs funding on. Paul Whitehead reported it is a combination of things including teachers, 1-2-1 support, training of teachers, specialist equipment and high-level personal care.

A Governor asked if the College is seeing an issue with learners coming from schools who did not want to “label” the students. Paul Whitehead reported that learners without EHCPs could be funded by high needs funding by Essex County Council. There is a lot of front-loaded investment with these learners that the College puts in place from the start to support these learners as best as possible. Karen Spencer reported that students with EHCPs outperform those without CPs and the issue is those who fall in the gap between this and not those not requiring support. There is an overlap between free school meals, social deprivation, lower level learning and prior attainment and those in receipt of bursary funding.

A Governor reported that schools could give the College information sooner and it was agreed that this would be helpful.

It was acknowledged that centralised oversight and tracking was required, as the Connexions service provided many years ago,

A Governor reported that feedback from employers is that they do not recruit to Level 2 / 3 foundation apprenticeships. Karen Spencer reported that this is fundamentally different to the feedback coming from the FSB. The FSB has reported that it is uncomfortable that Level 2 has been taken away from apprenticeships such as business administration.

The Corporation noted the Letter from The Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith Minister for Skills, dated 8 November 2024.

14.2 FE Commissioner Termly Newsletter – Autumn Term 2024

The Corporation received and considered the FE Commissioner Termly Newsletter – Autumn Term 2024.

Karen Spencer reported that the Remuneration Committee has held discussions around Senior Postholders’ appraisals and ensured that the guidance in Annex A of this newsletter is covered.

Karen Spencer highlighted the additional information on qualification reform.

The Corporation confirmed that the Corporation and the College is meeting all their duties in respect to managing public money guidance.

The Corporation noted the FE Commissioner Termly Newsletter – Autumn Term 2024.

15 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

16 Dates of Future Meetings

Spring Term 2025	Wednesday 26 March 2025	9am
Summer Term 2025	Thursday 22 May 2025	9am
	Thursday 10 July 2025	9am