

Chair	Rob Hull
Corporation Members	Marilyn Hawkins, Neil Yeomans, Sue Williams QPM, Gerry McDonald, Brij Patel, Philida Schellekens, Richard Smith Morgan, Claire Baker, Dean Stanford
Officers	Principal Tower Hamlets and Hackney: Alison Arnaud Principal Havering Colleges: Janet Smith Principal Redbridge and Epping Forest: Narzny Khan Deputy CEO – Imelda Galvin
Director of Governance	Elsa Wright
Apologies	Ruth Gilbert, Stephen Critoph, Nazia Faiz
Item No	Item of business
PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
1	Chair’s Welcome & Opening Remarks The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2	Apologies for Absences Apologies were received and accepted from Stephen Critoph, Nazia Faiz and Ruth Gilbert
3	Declaration of Interests Members were reminded of the need to declare any interest in any items on the agenda. No declarations were made.
4	Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on The minutes were APPROVED and would be signed as an accurate record of the meeting online.
	ACTION – Minutes to be signed online
5	Matters Arising and Action Points from the Meeting The matters arising were complete or were scheduled for discussion on the agenda.
STRATEGIC MATTERS	
6	CEO Report The College had had a very successful British council inspection with thanks to the GED, International and all the team at the Oxford School. NCC had also been shortlisted for two AOC beacon awards, with an assessment next term. There were congratulations for all involved. The awards were made to those colleges who were leading the sector and shortlisting was commendable. The CEO gave an update to his report. The Autumn statement had been silent on FE, with the national insurance changes helping a little. The defunding of BTECs continued and there was a risk to around 170 students from 9000 in this first round. However, this would rise sharply in subsequent years. The consultation on the new Advanced British

Standard (ABS) continued and the Principal, Tower Hamlets and Hackney would lead on the response. It had been trailed by some as the death of T levels but the expectation was that the content of T levels would be part of the ABS.

Adult funding was devolved to the GLA for all London students and the £300m pot for London had stayed the same since 2019. There was an uplift per course but no change in the funding envelope and the money would run out. The College delivered 11% of its provision for adults. Less courses would be delivered and there would be £2m unpaid if the College delivered the same provision. This would be added to the new risk register and built into planning.

Q1 was a relatively strong position with a 0.5% surplus expected. Permission to proceed at Wingletye Lane had been given and an 8 classroom block would be built. £4m was funded by the DFE from the £5m budget with a tight deadline of March 25 for all spending to be complete. The GLA had given the go ahead at Ardleigh Green for the revised project.

The Corporation was asked to give approval for a short term subcontracting arrangement with City Gateway. It was a small training provide in Tower Hamlets which support young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEETs); they offered flexible courses which NCC did not run. There would be support for the provision for a year through a limited subcontract with ESFA approval. There were 98 students registered. The funding would be above the normal allocation and the plan was to discuss the future with them.

Charitable donations were their main source of funding and they had no access to ESFA funds, as traineeships had been withdrawn. There were issues around quality and finance which would need to be closely managed through a subcontract. They had a £1.6m turnover and had received a grade 3 at its last OFSTED inspection. Work experience and tutorial support needed to be improved. There had been issues around outcomes and progression which had been raised in inspection. NCC had been paid a premium to give additional support. There was a small risk but the students had nowhere to go and it was the right thing to do. The team that managed the OJ provision would monitor and support this provision and the team were very familiar with the support required. There would be further conversations in January but the commitment was for one year.

ACTION – The Corporation agreed to the proposal to support City Gateway as set out in the paper.

6.1 Risk register

It was noted that the internal audit report had given reasonable assurance for risk with recommendations which were administrative. This included the lack of a formal risk management policy and a recommendation that the risk register came quarterly to Board. There had been no material change in the risk management process but the auditor had taken a different approach from the previous team.

Reclassification – the main impact was delays in getting decisions around Finance and senior appointments. The property development work may come under more scrutiny but the new handbook should give clarity.

There would be new guidance on the accountability agreement. It was noted that apprenticeship quality had improved. There was a discussion around capacity and recruitment. There were still some curriculum areas where recruitment was difficult including apprenticeship assessors and the decision had been made to not offer courses. Vacancies overall had improved but the difficulties would remain in the middle management tier with a £9,000 gap in pay with schools. Many of the areas that were proving difficult to recruit to reflect the national picture and this included health and social care and childcare.

	<p>Commercial income was still low. Industrial relations were positive.</p> <p>There were two additional risks identified at audit around cyber security and pension contributions. Both had the potential for a severe impact, with the latter impacting the whole sector if the grant ever ended.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the top 4 risks and how effective the mitigation was. The Chair of Audit and the Deputy CEO would do some further work on risk. Capacity was an issue and resilience was key. This included not just management but also income streams, cash flow and the balance sheet. Student enrolment had been an issue until recently as it looked to be a promising year, but it would always be there with upcoming demographic change, particularly in the inner London boroughs. It was noted that there were funding risks around the election.</p> <p>6.2 HE Update</p> <p>There was an update on HE and the plan was to bring a detailed business plan to the Board. There would be an update at the Strategy day. HE targets of £1.2m this year, £2m next year and £4m in year 2 had been set. SMT had considered options for working alone and in partnership and the Board would see more detail in February.</p> <p>Current provision was small and declining, with students reporting a positive experience. The TEF outcome was an award of Bronze status and the expectation was that at the next inspection in 4 years the College would move to Silver or possibly Gold. Work to develop provision with BSU and the University of London continued. There was a joint committee with BSU and options such as agency recruitment were being considered. This approach would include due diligence on potential agents and then small scale pilots in year. After testing, the College would go out to procurement. Most provision was for home students but there was an allowance of 40 overseas students, and this would double next year. There were three staff on the joint committee and there was both international and agency expertise. CQS would oversee the progress. It was noted that the attraction of HE teaching could help with recruitment.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Committee Recommendations</p> <p>The committee Chairs reported back on the recent round of meetings</p>
<p>7.1</p>	<p>Finance and General Purposes</p> <p>7.1.2</p> <p>The Corporation was asked to approve the Treasury Policy which set out the rules around overnight, short term deposit and the management of the cash flow and surplus. The committee would look at longer term investments in more detail at the next meeting. The policy had been updated to reflect both the ONS reclassification and the Managing Public Money guidance. There was a discussion around selecting depositor banks by using minimum rating categories rather than a list.</p> <p>ACTION – The Corporation agreed the Treasury Policy</p> <p>7.1.1</p> <p>The September management accounts were reported. The forecast through to the end of year showed around £750k to £1m surplus. The forecast for Q1 included the £3.4m uplift for funding of which £2.1m had been used to increase the pay award from the amount previously agreed in the summer. There were around £5-600k savings which had helped the position with tight controls on non pay costs. There had been significant growth in High Needs funding and low commercial income which were reflected in the report.</p> <p>Governors asked about the 850k surplus which was around in Q1. The Deputy CEO</p>

	<p>confirmed that the College would continue to look for savings and not just in year, as the challenges would continue next year with the adult funding changes. The budget position should be achieved, as planned and the College would move to outstanding financial health on that basis. Governors thanked the team for their hard work. A successful student enrolment process had made an impact and the Board thanked all those involved in managing the process.</p> <p>ACTION - The committee confirmed that the Financial Statements and Accounts for 2022/23 were in line with the reporting and the management accounts received by the committee during the year.</p>
<p>7.2</p>	<p>Audit committee</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit committee explained that there had been two internal audits; risk, as mentioned in the CEOs report and ransomware. There were some minor issues raised.</p> <p>The committee thanked the Finance Director for his work on the external audit and the committee recommended its annual report to the Corporation for sign off.</p> <p>ACTION – The Corporation agreed the Audit Committee Annual Report</p> <p>The external auditor, Katharine Patel joined the meeting. It had been a clean audit with an unmodified audit report. The Financial Statement gave a true and fair opinion and the regularity conclusion was unmodified. There was still some work to do on the Oxford School of English including some additional testing but the expectation was that this would be finalised with college accounts and submitted by 31 December deadline. The two subsidiaries had now ceased training.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the letters of representation were approved and that the Chair and CEO would sign. The auditor thanked the Finance Director and his team who had been under pressure to get everything finalised and it was recognised that it was a huge effort to bring everything together for the year end and a successful external audit -</p> <p>There was one main observation on OSE about the systems and controls and whether they were appropriate. There was a question about whether the due diligence should have picked up the amount of work that would be needed to get the systems up to date. The Deputy CEO explained that the OSE records before NCC bought the schools were based cash receipts and payments. The auditors were completing sample based testing from registers and reviewing accommodation costs. It was confirmed that the OSE had been brought into NCC systems.</p> <p>There was an update on statutory reporting numbers. FRS102 showed some big movements. If reserves were invested, the money did not count as cash. There was a discussion about the huge changes in the pension which was now in surplus. With the change to the public sector, there was a discussion about whether this should be on the government balance sheet. It was confirmed that although deficits had to be shown on the College balance sheet, a surplus could not.</p> <p>The carbon reporting had been updated with better measurement of Scope 3 emissions, which were those associated with the supply chain.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that the both OKN1 and New City Fitness (NCF) had been brought in house. There had been an HMRC issue to close down OKN1 around a corporation tax form for March 2024, which was a nil return. This had now been resolved and Buzzacott concluded their work.</p> <p>ACTION - The Corporation approved the Financial Statements and Letters of Representation for signature by the Chair on behalf of the Corporation and the</p>

	CEO, as Accounting Officer
7.3	<p>Curriculum, Quality and Students Committee</p> <p>The Committee appointed Philida Schellekens as the new Chair and Sue Williams as Vice Chair. Both the SAR and the QIP had been reviewed and they set out a high level summary of the areas for celebrating and any for concern.</p> <p>7.3.1</p> <p>The draft SAR was now presented to the Corporation for approval. In summary, it assured the Board that the College continued to be good in line with the inspection in November 2021 inspection. There were elements of outstanding provision and sustained quality in a context where others had seen a decline in outcomes. National rates had dropped from the previous data which was pre pandemic.</p> <p>Vocational provision was also outstanding in some areas. The achievement and pass rated in English and Maths, as well as Functional Skills were above other colleges. Apprenticeships had previously self assessed as requiring improvement but this was now good and above national rates. The Teaching & Learning lab was being used to inform teaching and to drive quality in the classroom with the aim of working this year to push toward outstanding. Construction and Engineering had been looked at in depth by the committee. There was huge variance in the directorate with some excellent provision and other areas requiring significant input.</p> <p>The QIP would focus on some A level subjects as well as Health care and Early years.</p> <p>The team were waiting for UCAS data which would be updated in the SAR before it was submitted to Ofsted in January. There had been a fall in applications with some students deciding to look for work or an apprenticeship rather than to go to university. Around 79-80% got their first choice which was a similar rate to in previous years and there was a significant increase in Russell group places which was positive.</p> <p>Governors commented that it was an impressive SAR. The context of the last three years had an impact on Construction. Staffing the provision was still difficult as earnings were higher on the tools. Retention was poor as many students would go into work as the construction sector was taking people without qualifications. The training was now exam based and this was once a year with no resits. Given the entry point of some of the learners, this was difficult and they struggled with exams. The changes around lower level provision were more than in other areas. There were a number of BTEC L3 courses that were being withdrawn. This was a struggle for the whole sector and student recruitment was an issue. The students did not want to come to college to study English and Maths and it was hard to keep them motivated.</p> <p>The staffing was now stable and there had been a management restructure. The approach to IAG had been and there were clear areas of focus for each campus. It was 1.7% of provision and it was noted that it was important not to focus a disproportionate amount of attention on it. However, the College was very clear that it needed to be improved and this would be part of the drive to move to outstanding.</p> <p>ESOL provision was outstanding for both adult and 16-18 students and this should be celebrate. Sport was another large area where there had been significant achievement, particularly in careers. 46% of Tottenham Hotspur coaches across all programmes were ex NCC students. Redbridge campus had been graded overall as outstanding. Governors asked about what would push a campus to be graded as outstanding. The team took a balanced scorecard approach looking at areas such as achievement, destinations and provision in the classroom. It was a judgement call but it was based on</p>

	<p>the education inspection framework (EIF) and NCC used the criteria produced. It was not a line but there needed to be consistency of good and better in the context of the learners and provision. If the QIP was delivered, it should take the College close to being outstanding.</p> <p>7.3.2 There were four target areas for the QIP for 2024-25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjects – Childcare and early years, Health and Social Care, selected A. level subjects; • Achievement rates with a focus on mental health needs and support • Attendance and the gap with English and Maths • Teaching and Learning and assessment consistency <p>There was a discussion about targets and alignment with the national rates was a minimum. The benchmark was to meet NR if provision was below. Every curriculum are would set targets and each course target would be based on previous performance and aspiration in the area. The impact of quality assurance systems had been subsumed into T&L target.</p> <p>The committee would look in more detail at the KPI model at its March meeting.</p> <p>ACTION – The Corporation approved the SAR and the QIP</p>
<p>7.4</p>	<p>Property Committee</p> <p>The Chair of the committee reported on the meeting. The College had been waiting for decisions from the GLA and Havering Local Authority which were now positive. The build at Wingletye Lane would be starting shortly with a slightly longer process for Ardleigh Green. Conversations about the Hackney development had been delayed with the election of a new mayor and this would now take place in January. There was little to report at this stage on the Poplar development.</p> <p>The committee had reviewed the environmental sustainability report and board members were encouraged to read it. It gave a good picture of the work that had been done to put this on the agenda of students, staff and property development work. The work was significant and the College had been shortlisted for an AOC Beacon award for this work.</p> <p>RAAC – The committee had been updated with all surveys completed and no RAAC found. The College rented a number of floors in a building in Ilford, which was considered low risk. The Council would be conducting their own survey.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Reports to note</p> <p>The Corporation was reminded that there were reports to note on the portal including health and safety and marketing.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>It was noted that there were a number of governors visits scheduled for the Spring term and all governors were encouraged to visit, if possible.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Date of next meeting –26 March 2023</p> <p>Members were reminded of the date of the next meeting to take place in the Board Room at Poplar. The Strategy Day on 1 February was important with a Special Board meeting taking place on the same day.</p>