

**MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 12TH DECEMBER 2024
PART ONE**

Members:

Charlotte Bosworth
Barbara Van Der Eecken
Mary Mahoney
Alexandru Marina
Edward Ng
Stuart Pedley-Smith
Mykola Novnyi
Tony Sadla
Jat Sharma
Nelson Tanyanyiwa
Graham Ward
Garry Welborn
David Wheeler

In Attendance:

Richard Brennan, Assistant Principal Curriculum
Kirsti Lord, Deputy Principal Curriculum, Innovation & Student Success
Jacky Leek, Interim Director of Finance
James Norris, Assistant Principal Adults & Work-Based Learning
Deb Rajania, Director of Operations & Resources
David Turner, Assistant Principal Quality & HE
Lesley Venables, Head of Governance

Directors of Faculty – Rachel Davies, Rachael Smith and Mark Pemberton

Mark Bradley, Beever & Struthers (External Auditor) – minutes 110 to 139

	CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS	
110	The Chair welcomed the Directors of Faculty and the External Auditor to the meeting.	
	APOLOGIES	
111	Apologies for absence were received from Paul Averis, Heather Lodge and Rani Sahota.	
	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
112	There were no declarations of interest in any specific agenda items.	
	MINUTES	
113	Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2024 (Parts 1 & 2) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendments: Apologies for absence – Richard Brennan to be included Minute 8 – date should be March 2025 Minutes 17, 19, 21 and 85 – explicit governor challenge to be included Minute 18 – add comments from Convene Minute 26 – add the Corporation's thanks to the Student Union for the range of activities undertaken in 2023/2024	
	MATTERS ARISING	
114	The Board received a progress report on actions arising from previous meetings and noted that the majority of these were either completed or in progress.	LV
115	Updates were added to individual items as appropriate and a further monitoring report would be presented to the next scheduled Corporation meeting.	
116	In relation to the point raised at the last meeting on safeguarding of apprentices at CCM when staying overnight, the Principal reported that the existing measures were in line with those in use by another large FE provider	

	that worked with the CITB. Further details would be included in the next safeguarding update to the Corporation.	RJ/CW
LINK GOVERNOR ACTIVITIES		
117	Governors reported on recent link governor activities as follows: Graham Ward – Hairdressing, Law A Level Barbara Van Der Eecken – Personal Development in 3 curriculum areas, including talks given by previous students on their experience at the College David Wheeler – Law, Hair & Beauty, 14-16 – viewed catch-up sessions for students who had been absent; CCM – 3D Design Tony Sadla – Sport Levels 1 to 3	ALL/LV
118	Members were reminded to complete the form to record their activities and return them to the Head of Governance. These would be circulated to the relevant manager for information.	
CORPORATE PLAN		
119	The Deputy Principal presented the final draft of the Corporate Plan. A number of further amendments were highlighted: • Priority 5 – include reference to ‘challenge’ • KPIs to include Student Satisfaction rate together with the benchmark from the York College survey	KL
120	A governor questioned whether the Executive felt that the targets were sufficient stretching to enable the College to achieve an ‘outstanding’ Ofsted grade by 2030. The Deputy Principal responded that ambitious targets had been included for both staff and student metrics, which had been based on the College’s aspirations rather than on national benchmarks, which were often outdated.	
121	It was agreed that the KPIs relating to the Property Strategy would be informed by feedback from governors with relevant expertise.	
122	Resolved - 1 That the Corporate Plan be approved 2 That a timetable for setting and monitoring the milestones within the Corporate Plan and which committees would scrutinise each of these would be submitted to the Corporation’s March 2025 meeting	
UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT		
123	Governors received a draft Partnership Agreement between the College and Worcester University. This would allow the College to signpost learners to HE provision outside of the College, to raise aspirations amongst local students to progress to university and to access the University’s CPD opportunities and careers guidance. It was felt by management that this arrangement would formalise the existing partnership with a substantial cohort of Level 3 learners opting to enrol at Worcester University after they completed their courses at the College.	
124	Concerns were raised by governors that the document was being submitted in isolation from any coherent Higher Education Strategy, which had not yet been brought to the Board for discussion and approval. The AP Adults & WBL	

125 126 127 128	reported that the HE Strategy had not yet been completed as it was dependent on some of the elements of the Corporate Plan, which had now been approved under an earlier agenda item. A governor commented that there was insufficient information in the draft partnership agreement for the Corporation to make a decision and that the Board needed assurance that it aligned to the HE Strategy. Other potential partners may be deterred from approaching the College due having an exclusive relationship with Wolverhampton University, which was seeking to expand its HE provision to compensate for lower numbers of international students. A further issue was raised in relation to students' willingness to travel to Worcester, as it was often difficult to persuade them to attend the College's satellite campuses. Governors asked for further work to be undertaken on the draft agreement and that it should be effective from September 2025, not January 2025. Information on the contribution to the College was required. Resolved - That additional work be carried out on the draft partnership agreement and brought back to the next meeting of the Corporation on the recommendation of the Learning & Quality Committee	JN/KL
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2023/2024		
129 130 131 132 133 134	Governors received the draft Financial Statements for 2023/2024, together with the Management Letters on the Financial Statements and Regularity Audits and the Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2023/2024. The budget for 2023/2024 had forecast a deficit of £1.53m, however, the outturn was a deficit of £3.053m due to a previous decision on the treatment of capital assets. A number of accounting adjustments would need to be made that had not been included in the Management Accounts for July 2024, such as the asset value of the Local Government Pension Scheme, holiday pay accrual and capital grant releases. The Finance & Resources Committee had discussed in detail the variations in the College's financial position. The most significant of these was the release of capital grants (£3m) for the Green Lane Extension and the Transformation Fund. Governors were reminded of their responsibilities in approving the financial statements, in terms of the College continuing to be classified as a 'going concern', ensuring the effective and efficient use of resources, solvency and value for money and that the governance, risk management and control frameworks were suitably robust, as evidenced by the audit. The purpose of the Financial Statements audit was to provide the Corporation with the necessary assurance. The management letters outlined the position at the date of the Audit Committee meeting. A number of items were still to be resolved, including the receipt of a funding reconciliation from the West Midlands Combined Authority which would not be sent to the College until 19th December. A governor questioned whether this	

	would impact on the Chair and the Principal signing the accounts and was advised that this was still appropriate, but the signature of the External Auditor could only be affixed once the WMCA had issued the required paperwork.	
135	One material misstatement had been identified relating to income from a sub-contracting arrangements with JTL Ltd in a previous academic year.	
136	The Interim Director of Finance reported that the Finance & Resources Committee had reviewed the Financial Statements and had recommended them for approval by the Corporation. The Audit Committee had also scrutinised the Management Letters for the Financial Statements and the Regularity Audit, together with the Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2023/2024.	
137	The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee commented that the College had sufficient cash reserves (approx. £12m) to cover the level of the current deficit (£3m), which meant that it was considered to be a going concern. The position identified in the Financial Statements was mainly due to an accounting methodology that had been determined a number of years ago and not due to the College's financial performance for 2023/2024.	
138	Governors expressed their thanks to the Interim Director of Finance and her team for their work on the Financial Statements and to the External Auditors (Beever & Struthers).	
139	Resolved: 1 That the Financial Statements for the College and for Broadway Training Limited for 2023/2024 be approved 2 That the Student Union accounts for 2023/2024 be noted 3 That the Letters of Representation for the Financial Statements and Regularity Audits be approved and signed by the Chair on behalf of the Corporation 4 That the Chair and the Principal be given delegated authority to sign the Financial Statements for 2023/2024, once the reconciliation statements had been received from the ESFA and the WMCA 5 That copies of the above documents be forwarded to the ESFA by the deadline of 31st December 2024 Mark Bradley left the meeting.	
SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023/2024 AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024/2025		
140	The Directors of the College's 4 faculties presented their draft SARs/QIPs and the following items were noted:	
141	Apprenticeships Retention had been benchmarked against the Accountability Framework and was 61.4% overall, compared to 54.4% in 2022/2023. Pass rates were 96% (97% in 2022/2023) and the overall achievement level was 57.5% against the benchmark of 54%. Attendance was 82.5% and 73.5% for English and Maths.	
142	A governor asked whether pass rates were improving in all areas for 2024/2025 and was advised that Construction was currently 53%, but the significant investment in the Green Lane Campus to support end point	

	assessments should be beneficial. It had been difficult to source staff for Electrical provision as there were only 2 in the area. The Corporation was also advised that many of these apprenticeship programmes took longer to complete and that the retention of high quality, experienced staff was an issue. In response to questions about the opportunities for which staff left the College. Governors were informed that a number had returned to industry as the levels of pay were higher than in further education.	
143	A total of 93.6% of apprentices had progressed to positive destinations, compared to 97% in 2022/2023.	
144	The Quality of Education had been assessed as 'Good', with 92.3% of adults achieving their qualifications, entry requirements that reflected the local demographic and staff with a high level of subject knowledge. Personal Development was assessed as 'Good'	
145	Governors noted that there was a gap in achievement levels for High Needs students, but there was now a more positive relationship with the support team. In response to questions the Director of Apprenticeships reported that this was due to some adults requiring support outside of an Education Health & Care Plan that could be difficult to provide effectively.	
146	Female apprentices outperformed their male peers and there were no achievement gaps in relation to ethnicity.	
147	The areas for improvement had been identified as achievement rates (this had already increased in the current year), retention, attendance and attendance at Maths and English sessions. The latest Ofqual data on outcomes focused on first time pass attempts, rather than the overall pass rates for each qualification.	
148	STEAM Retention levels were 89.2% compared to the target of 89.3%. Pass rates for 2023/2024 were 91.3% compared to the benchmark of 89.5% and the level of achievement was 81.4% against the average of 79.9%.	
149	The Quality of Education and Behaviours & Attitudes had been assessed as 'Good', with Personal Development graded as 'Outstanding'.	
150	The number of students claiming Free School Meals and High Needs support had increased year on year. Students from deprived wards had lower levels of achievement, BAME students performed better than their White British peers and outcomes for students with learning difficulties/disabilities were lower than their non-SLDD counterparts.	
151	The majority of curriculum areas had elevated levels of retention, however, initiatives such as pre-enrolment support and taster days had been implemented in Construction to improve this further.	
152	Destinations were highly positive, with a significant proportion of students progressing to sector specific jobs and further study.	
153	The faculty had benefitted from a good level of engagement with employers, including the co-design of some areas of the ambitious curriculum that should prepare students for their future careers.	

154	The renewed focus on teaching, learning and assessment was now having an impact on students, which was evidenced in recent walkthroughs.
155	High grades for Maths had increased and behaviours and attitudes were good. Punctuality was 95.4% and the faculty set high expectations and professionalism for its students, The promotion and understanding of the Prevent Agenda and British Values was strong and personal development tutors worked closely with vocational staff. Currently there was a 1% achievement gap for students from postcodes with a high level of deprivation and from those from an ethnic minority.
156	The QIP had highlighted the need to improve levels of attendance (there had already been changes to the management structure which had impacted on this area), initial advice and guidance, GCSE Maths & English achievement levels, staffing on some courses, work placements particularly at lower levels of qualification and achievement rates in Science and A Levels.
157	A governor commented that the addition of social space at the Green Lane Campus had reduced the number of complaints from students and meant that supported learning activities, such as the Freshers Fair, could be held on site.
158	The Director of Faculty was asked about the areas that were not performing as well as others and reported that these were Music and Level 2 Art & Design. Information on each provision type would be presented at the next Learning & Quality Committee meeting and governors were advised that a detailed action plan was in place to address these issues and that L2 Art & Design had been discussed at the recent course monitoring meeting.
159	Vocational 6th Form Governors were advised that performance levels varied across this faculty. Retention had improved, to 90.4% compared to the benchmark of 88.4%, whilst the challenges associated with this cohort of students had impacted adversely on attendance and pass rates in areas such as Travel & Tourism and Protected Services.
160	Pass rates for 2023/2024 were 87.9% against a benchmark of 90.4%, with overall achievement levels at 79.5% compared to the benchmark of 80%. Achievement levels for Health & Social Care, Protected Services and Business & Law had not met the identified target. Destinations had high levels of positivity across all curriculum areas.
161	The Quality of Education had been assessed as 'Good', with appropriate sequencing of the curriculum, improved teaching, learning and assessment (although preparation and assessment required further work) and a small increase in overall performance. Progress on GCSE Maths and English courses was insufficient.
162	Although Behaviour & Attitudes was good, attendance was an issue for the faculty at 78.9% and 72.7% for Maths and English classes.
163	High Needs students achieved better outcomes than their non-HN peers. However, there were high levels of deprivation amongst the student cohort and many learners who had self-diagnosed as having SEND on enrolment, which was impacting on performance levels.

164	The areas for improvement set out in the QIP centred around attendance, progression on English & Maths programmes, the achievement gap for SLDD students and overall performance for Health & Social Care and Protected Services.	
165	A governor questioned how the Corporation could be assured that the quality of teaching was improving. The Assistant Principal Curriculum detailed the evidence from walkthroughs and deep dive reviews, but acknowledged that there were pockets where the approach to teaching and learning was not sufficiently targeted. High grades were strong for BTec programmes, which were project-based, enabling learners to be continually engaged.	
166	The Corporation felt that teaching and learning did not feature strongly enough in the QIP, for example, changes to the teaching style could impact on attendance. It was suggested that there should be further discussion on this at the next Learning & Quality Committee meeting. The Assistant Principal was also asked to ensure that there was sufficient quantification of the statements in the SAR.	L&Q RB
167	A governor commented that there appeared to be a theme emerging across all curriculum areas on attendance. It was difficult to influence behaviours and attitudes to attendance as there were no strict entry requirements and sometimes students were enrolled on the wrong programme. The Board was informed that schools provided pupils with courses designed to enable them to achieve the next step but achievement rates were poor. This meant that the students often had to repeat some of their previous learning.	
168	The student cohort had changed in its composition and behaviours, having been impacted by the recent social environment. The College's curriculum had not responded quickly enough to this shift, but this was now being addressed. Further discussion would take place at the Learning & Quality Committee.	L&Q
169	A governor asked about performance on AS Levels and was advised that this related to a small cohort of students on a one-year programme.	
	Adults, Community Learning & SEND	
170	The faculty was working towards the 2030 benchmark for retention and the overall levels was 95.3%), despite the fact that many of the students were considered to be vulnerable.	
171	Overall pass rates were 89% and achievement was 84.3% against the benchmark of 82.4%. Destinations were positive, but it had been difficult to obtain accurate data in some cases.	
172	The Quality of Education had been assessed as 'Good' and teaching and learning as very strong (as evidenced through Student Voice feedback). There were a small number of learners who had not been set targets.	
173	Behaviours and attitudes were 'Good' and attendance was 83.7% overall.	
174	The majority of curriculum areas had been graded as 'Outstanding' for personal development with the exception of Professional Services.	

175	High Needs students achieved well and students were aware of their individual targets and what was required to meet these. A significant amount of work had been undertaken in advance of the courses starting to settle students into the College environment.	Exec/ Cttees
176	There were gaps in achievement levels for males on ESOL, Access and Professional Services programmes and for students from ethnic minorities on the Achieving Together course.	
177	The QIP set out a number of areas further improvement including attendance levels, recruitment, achievement and the Quality of Education, improving achievement levels for males compared to females. A full review of the Achieving Together provision would commence shortly.	
178	Governors were also advised that there needed to be a greater breadth of learning and that the curriculum needed to be updated to ensure that students were appropriately stretched.	
179	A review of Professional Services had been undertaken and a new manager had been appointed from January 2025. A small number of staff were being performance-managed.	
180	Further areas of focus for 2024/2025 were Level 2 adult Functional Skills Maths, ensuring that start points informed TLA and target-setting, advice and guidance in Professional Services and improving employer and stakeholder engagement.	
181	A governor commented that the education case for the Adult Learning Centre project could be viewed as weakened by the information contained in the SAR and QIP, as this had been predicated on a high level of performance by the Professional Services curriculum area. The Corporation was advised that the full business and education case for the ALC would be submitted to the relevant committees early next term (Learning & Quality, Finance & Resources and the Capital Projects Working Group).	
182	A number of professional bodies had been approached to ensure a high level of engagement in future curriculum design that was relevant to careers in this area. Apprenticeships at Level 5 would be offered at the ALC, such as Operational Management. In the past it had been difficult for the College to attract and retain suitably qualified and experienced staff for these qualifications.	
EXECUTIVE SAR & QIP		
183	The Assistant Principal Quality presented the Executive SAR and QIP, which had been based on the key themes identified in the faculty presentations together with cross-College areas.	
184	The SAR graded the College as 'Good' overall with Personal Development graded as 'Outstanding'	
185	The areas for improvement identified in the SAR were: A strengthened curriculum intent so that it is consistently clear in all curriculum areas.	

186	- Teaching practice with increased student engagement and stretch and challenge; - Positive destinations for all provision types; - Student achievement across many areas, - Outstanding Personal Development - Strong contribution to meeting skills needs. Four key areas had been identified for further development: - Student attendance - High-grade achievement in GCSE English and maths - Some pockets of student achievement in vocational subject areas - Overall achievement rates for Apprenticeship provision, especially areas where timely attainment is particularly poor.	Exec
187	Governors felt that the management team recognised the areas of focus for activities in 2024/2025 and had a robust plan to achieve its goal of being an outstanding college by 2030. It was agreed that the document provided a rigorous assessment of the College and its performance and was reflective of the recent external validation process undertaken by Ofsted.	
188	Any additional comments on the content would be fed back to the Learning & Quality Committee and reported to the next scheduled Corporation meeting (March 2025). The SAR would be updated once the Ofsted report had been published.	
189	Resolved – That the Self-Assessment Report for 2023/2024 and the Quality Improvement Plan for 2024/2025 be approved	
OFSTED INSPECTION OUTCOME		
190	The Deputy Principal presented a report on the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection, which had graded the College as 'Good' overall. This provided a useful starting point on which to build to achieve its 2030 ambition. It was important that governors understood the findings and that they ensured that the areas for improvement were addressed.	
191	The feedback provided as provisional at this stage and the final report would be published in the New Year.	
192	Ofsted considered that Intent was very strong across the College. Implementation was evidenced by high quality practice in the classroom. However, a small number of inconsistencies had been identified by the inspectors such as the need to set targets at the start of programmes. Further work was required on advice and guidance.	
193	Attendance (but punctuality was high) and students demonstrated a good level of resilience. Personal Development had been judged as 'outstanding and the investment in resources and engagement by staff, students and employers had been noted.	
194	Ofsted had reported that leaders and managers were aware of the areas for improvement and had already started to work through these. Safeguarding was effective with no concerns raised.	

195	A high degree of consistency had been apparent in the Skills Judgement, with good strategic links with employers and a translation of the strategic skills environment into classroom practice.	
196	Three main areas for further work had been cited – attendance, achievement on English & Maths courses and start-point assessments. Many of these featured in the KPIs attached to the 2030 project. Milestones would now be set for each year and performance against the KPIs would be monitored by the relevant committee, which would also agree a number of sub-KPIs. The sequencing of the KPIs needed to drive the necessary improvements eg raising attendance levels in year 1 of a programme could impact on later levels of attendance but also elements such as retention and achievement.	
197	One of the areas of questioning by Ofsted related to A Levels and why the College continued to offer these, particularly as performance was relatively poor. It had been felt that the Corporation needed to challenge this situation more robustly.	
198	Evidence of governor challenge had not always been obvious from a review of the relevant committee minutes. This was partly due to some discussions between governors and the management team taking place offline and, therefore, not formally recorded. It was felt that reports for meetings tended to include too much narrative, which reduced the ability of governors to challenge and question appropriately.	
199	Governors noted that staff and students had performed well during the inspection process and passed on their thanks to each of these groups.	
DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS		
	23 rd January 2025 Special Corporation 4 th February 2025 Search & Governance Standards Committee 4 th February 2025 Governor Training 11 th February 2025 Finance & Resources Committee 27 th February 2025 Learning & Quality Committee 11 th March 2025 Audit Committee 13 th March 2025 Student Voice Committee 27 th March 2025 Corporation	