

**College of West Anglia
Minutes of
The Chairs' Meeting
18 May 2022
10.30 am
Remote Meeting – Microsoft Teams**

Present	Sam Fletcher	Governor (Chair)
	Chris Ashman	Governor
	Sally Mitton	Governor
	David Pomfret	Governor (Principal)
	Gill Rejzl	Governor
	Hein van den Wildenberg	Governor
Attending	Stephen Halls	Clerk to the Corporation

The Chair thanked members for their flexibility in attending this meeting which had originally been scheduled for 25 May 2022 but needed to be changed due to a College event.

The Chair welcomed and congratulated Gill Rejzl, this being her first meeting as Corporation Chair, and noted the retirement of Sharon Cambridge, following the Chair's Dinner on 5 May 2022.

The Chair welcomed Sally Mitton as the new Chair of the Employment Policy Committee to her first meeting of the Chairs' meeting group.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Ray Harding, Chair of the Audit Committee.

2 Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 9 February 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2022 were agreed as being an accurate record.

4 Matters Arising

There were no outstanding matters arising from previous meetings.

5 Principal's Update

The Principal provided updates on several matters:

- a) DfE Annual Strategic Conversation – This review meeting, to be held the following week (24 May 2022), would be attended by 2 members of the Department for Education (formerly ESFA) and a representative from the FE Commissioner, and would hear short

presentations from the Chair, Principal, SMT members and the Clerk. The aim of the review was to have a positive and purposeful dialogue, demonstrating the achievements and current challenges faced by the College.

- b) Funding Bids – Collaborative bids had recently been submitted, one of which was led by CWA for the CPCA region; the other led by City College Norwich for the New Anglia area. Both projects would involve green skills and joint professional development. If successful, funds would help with the development of the Wisbech campus. The results of the bids were expected to be announced in July 2022, with the projects to be delivered by 31 March 2023. If successful, the College would look to appoint a project manager to oversee the project.
- c) Carbon Net Zero Project – the expression of interest submitted by the College for funding from both the CPCA and the Levelling Up Fund (managed by Fenland District Council, FDC) had been successful and the College was now developing a full business case for submission. It was anticipated that FDC would be looking to support 3 projects within its area.
- d) HE Provision - *this item was deemed 'Confidential.'*
- e) Cyber Essentials – this certification had been achieved on 6 May 2022 and the College was currently working to achieving 'Cyber Essentials Plus' accreditation. Governors noted that this provided significant assurance to the Board regarding cyber security and asked if there were any other benefits to the College for having this certification. The Principal noted that in time this would become a requirement of the funding agreement with the DfE as the College received public funding. In addition, it was expected that insurance premiums would be lower in relation to cyber threats, although this would not be known for sure until the insurance cover for the College was next reviewed.
- f) Pay Award - *this item was deemed 'Confidential.'*
- g) Staff Recruitment Fair – this was taking place on Wednesday 25 May 2022 with 47 people so far having signed up to the event. During the day, those attending would receive a welcome from the Principal and then be given the chance to observe and work alongside an existing lecturer in a classroom/workshop environment.
- h) Staffing Matters – Kerry Heathcote, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality would be commencing at the College on 13 June 2022 and would receive a handover from Ruth Harrison. It was expected that Ruth would leave the College that week, although this may be extended for a second week of handover if required. A new Head of Finance had been appointed, Jenny Quaif, commencing in July 2022. The recruitment for the post of Head of HR was being managed by Michael Page Consultants. The recruitment of a new Head of Technology had been unsuccessful, despite 2 campaigns; for now, the Principal would be engaging an experienced faculty manager on a part-time, interim basis to cover the vacancy. Following the second campaign the Principal would be interviewing 5 candidates the following week for the post of Head of Apprenticeships.
- i) Complaint - *this item was deemed 'Confidential.'*

6 Update from Committee Chairs

- a) Audit Committee – the Corporation Chair reported that Ray Harding had taken over as Chair of the Audit Committee and would be holding his first meeting in June 2022. The Corporation Chair, (previously Chair of Audit) would offer support to Ray if needed.
- b) Employment Policy Committee – The Committee Chair reported that at its meeting held earlier that morning the Committee's thanks were given and recorded for Nicky

Rowland, Head of HR, who would be retiring from the College in August 2022 after 22 years' service. The Committee had reviewed a number of reports and policies during the meeting. The main item to share was the pay award proposal, already reported by the Principal under Item 5. *The remainder of this item was deemed 'Confidential.'*

- c) Finance & General Purposes Committee – The Committee Chair was pleased with the appointment of the new Head of Finance. At the next meeting the committee would scrutinise the pay award proposal, budget for 2022/23 and the medium-term financial plan and would consider also the risk appetite for the College, ready for its recommendation to the Board.
- d) Performance Review & Quality Committee – The Chair referred to the senior vacancies within Apprenticeships and Technology, noting that the committee would continue to closely monitor these areas within its meetings. The Chair commented on the retirement of Ruth Harrison, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality, and the input she had given to the committee through her reports, presentations and discussions.
- e) Search & Governance – The Corporation Chair reported that the committee had considered a recent application for Board membership which was progressing. The Corporation Chair said that she would highlight the Board's strengths to the review panel at the forthcoming DfE Strategic Conversion. The Committee had discussed the external review and would be monitoring how other colleges were managing this process in advance of CWA's own review, planned for 2023/24. There were some concerns in how the increased focus on governance and the responsibilities and expectations of the role may adversely affect the future recruitment of new governors. The Corporation Chair reported the recently announced retirement of the Clerk, planned for 31 December 2022. Although regrettable, the Clerk's retirement would provide an opportunity to review the governance support function and the necessary resources required to manage the growing demands. A recruitment campaign would be instigated shortly.

7 Any Other Business

The Corporation Chair advised Committee Chairs that she would value the opportunity of attending their committee meetings as part of her induction into the role as Corporation Chair and would be contacting each chair in turn to arrange when to attend.

8 Chair's items for briefing to the Corporation

The areas of interest for Governors would be reported by the Principal in his strategic update report to the Board on 6 July 2022.

9 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 7 September 2022 at 8.30 am.

The meeting closed at 11.34 am