

THE TRAFFORD COLLEGE GROUP

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Corporation
held on Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 5.30 pm via Microsoft Teams**

Present:	Graham Luccock	(Chairperson)
	James Scott	(Principal and Chief Executive Officer)
	Jill Bottomley	
	Glad Capewell	
	Sarah Drake	
	Janet Grant	
	Jed Hassid	
	Alison Hewitt	
	Heather Lang	
	Michelle McLaughlin	(Staff Member)
	Ayo Oyebode	
	Louise Richardson	
	Sattar Shakoor	
	Fatma Shami	(Student Member)
Lina Tsui-Cheung		
Sabine Van der Veer		
In Attendance:	Andrea Bennett	(Turnaround Director)
	Alison Duncalf	(Deputy Corporation Secretary)
	Carmen Gonzalez-Eslava	(Deputy Principal)
	Kal Kay	(Chief Finance Officer)
	Carl Miles	(Director of Marketing and External Relations)
	Michelle Leslie	(Vice Principal Corporate Services and Planning)
	Michael Speight	(Mazars)
	Nivi Muthukumar	(Grant Thornton)
	Michael Frankish	(Grant Thornton)

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The Chairperson opened the meeting by extending a welcome to the attending representatives from Mazars, Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College (CAMSF) Financial Statements Auditor and Grant Thornton, The Trafford College Group's (TTCG) Financial Statements Auditor.

COR/124/21 Apologies for Absence

The Deputy Corporation Secretary (DCS) reported that apologies had been received from James, Beazley, Sue Derbyshire, Colette Fagan, Jeremy Woodside and Barry Watson.

Kurt Allman and Adam Redford were not in attendance and no apologies were received.

COR/125/21 Declarations of Direct or Indirect Interest

Louise Richardson and Jed Hassid declared an interest in item 5e (an extension to their terms of office) and it was resolved that they should remain present during

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consideration of the item but that they should abstain from any considerations in relation to this matter.

There were no other declarations of interest in any of the meeting business items.

COR/126/21 Minutes of the Board of the Corporation Meeting held on 20 October 2021

It was reported that the following policies had been incorrectly apportioned to the Vice Principal Corporate Services and Planning (VPCSP) and that they fell within the responsibilities of the Deputy Principal (DP):

COR/ 115/21 – Special Education Needs and Disability Policy 2021/2022

COR/ 116/21 – Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy 2021/2022

COR/ 117/ 21 – Sexual Violence, Harassment and Abuse Policy 2021/2024

There was agreement that the minutes be amended accordingly.

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting, incorporating the above revision, be approved and accepted as a correct account of the meeting proceedings.

COR/127/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chairperson referred members to the previously circulated summary of the actions arising from the minutes and the progress attained therein.

Questions and comments were invited.

i) Governor email addresses

With respect to the ongoing issues in relation to governor TTCG email addresses the Chairperson referenced a recent communication from the Corporation Secretary in relation to the current position and resolution moving forward.

Concerns were expressed by members in relation to the receipt of emails and notifications of meetings. Assurance was provided by the Chairperson that dialogue was taking place with IT and that remedial actions were being progressed including actions arising from the Governor IT survey as well as the provision of additional BoardEffects and Office 365 training.

Action: Corporation Secretary

There were no further matters raised by members arising from the minutes that had not been actioned or were on the meeting's agenda.

COR/128/21 Report and Financial Statements for Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College (CAMSF) up to 3 May 2021

Members were referred to the previously circulated Report and Financial Statements for CAMSF up to 3 May 2021 and the Chairperson invited the representative from Mazars and the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) to present the item.

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The Mazars representative provided the Board of the Corporation with an overview of the Report and Financial Statements for Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College up to 2 May 2021 and it was advised that they had previously been considered in detail by the Audit Committee as well as by the Board of the Corporation in draft format

There were no questions or issues raised by members and it was resolved that the Report and Financial Statements for CAMSFC up to 3 May 2021 be unanimously approved and that the authorised signatories (Chairperson and Principal and CEO) be duly authorised to sign the document accordingly.

Action: Chairperson/Principal and CEO

COR/129/21 Audit Completion Report and Letter of Representation for CAMSFC up to 3 May 2021

Members were referred to the previously circulated Audit Completion Report and Letter of Representation for CAMSFC up to 3 May 2021.

There was confirmation that the report had been presented to and considered in detail at meetings of the Audit Committee held on 16 September 2021 and 22 November 2021 and was commended to the Board of Corporation for approval.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Audit Completion Report and Letter of Representation for CAMSFC up to 3 May 2021 be approved.

COR/130/21 Annual Report of the Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College Audit Committee for the period ending 3 May 2021

The Chairperson of the Audit Committee presented a copy of the Annual Report and Letter of Representation for CAMSFC for the period ending 3 May 2021 and provided an overview of the aspects of the report.

It was confirmed that that the report had been considered in detail by the Audit Committee and had also been presented to and signed by the Chairperson of the CAMSFC Audit Committee who had also confirmed that the report presented a true and accurate record.

There were no questions or issues raised by members arising from the report and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Annual Report of the Audit Committee of Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College for the period ending 3 May 2021 be approved.

COR/131/21 Report and Financial Statements for The Trafford College Group including Letter of Representation for the period ending 31 July 2022

Members were referred to the previously circulated Report and Financial Statements for TTCG for the period ending 31 July 2022.

The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) confirmed that the Audit Committee, at its meeting on 22 November 2021, had given detailed consideration to the Report and Financial

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Statements as well as the letter of representation, and recommended them to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

It was further confirmed that the Report and Financial Statements included the balances acquired as part of the merger with CAMSFC and also included 3 months of trading activity relating to the Cheadle and Marple campuses.

The Grant Thornton representative (MF) presented an overview of the report and highlighted the key issues.

Questions from members were invited.

- A question was asked by a member in relation to the inclusion of statements within the TTCG report relating to greenhouse gas emissions and energy use but that equivalent information was omitted from the CAMSFC report.

There was confirmation that there was a threshold in terms of the size of an entity and the requirements in relation to reporting and that CAMSFC fell below this threshold.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was unanimously resolved that the Report and Financial Statements for The Trafford College Group, including the Letter of Representation, for the period ending 31 July 2021 be approved and that the authorised signatories (Chairperson and Principal and CEO) be duly authorised to sign the document accordingly.

Action: Chairperson/Principal and CEO

COR/132/21 The Trafford College Group Audit Findings Report for the period ending 31 July 2021

Members were referred to the previously circulated Audit Findings Report for the period 31 July 2021 in respect of TTCG.

There was confirmation that the Report had been considered in detail at meetings of the Audit Committee held on 16 September 2021 and 22 November 2021 and was recommended to the Board of Corporation for approval.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that The Trafford College Group Audit Findings Report for the period ending 31 July 2021 be approved.

COR/133/21 Self-Assessment of Compliance with Regularity and Propriety Requirements for The Trafford College Group and Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College 2020/21

Members were referred to the previously circulated completed Self-Assessment with Regularity and Propriety Requirements (SACRP) 2020/2021 in relation to both TTCG and CAMFC.

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The CFO stated that it was a requirement of the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice that the completed Self-Assessment questionnaire be signed by the Chairperson and Accounting Officer (PCEO).

It was further confirmed that the SACRPs had been presented to and considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2021.

There were no issues or questions raised by members and following due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Self-Assessment of Compliance with Regularity and Propriety Requirements for The Trafford College Group and Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College be approved and the Chairperson and Principal and CEO be duly authorised to sign the documents accordingly.

Action: Chairperson/Principal and CEO

COR/134/21 The Trafford College Group Annual Report of the Audit Committee for the period ending 31 July 2021

The Chairperson of the Audit Committee presented a copy of the TTCG Annual Report of the Audit Committee for the period ending 31 July 2021 and provided an overview of the key aspects of the report.

There was confirmation that the report had been considered in detail by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2021 and the Chairperson of the Audit Committee further confirmed that he was satisfied the report presented an accurate record of the work undertaken by the Audit Committee during the 2020/2021 academic year.

There were no questions or issues raised by members arising from the report and after due consideration it was unanimously resolved that the Annual Report of the Audit Committee of The Trafford College Group for the period ending 31 July 2021 be approved.

COR/135/21 Management Accounts for the 3 months ending 31 October 2021

The CFO referred members to the previously circulated Management Accounts for the 3 months ending 31 October 2021.

The CFO advised that the Management Accounts to period 2 had previously been considered in detail by the Resources Committee at its meeting held on 9 October 2021.

The CFO referenced the new format and presentation stating that the report commenced with a high-level overview and thereafter provided greater detail around the numbers. A brief overview of the key issues from the accounts provided within which the following was highlighted:

- that the forecast suggests that all KPIs would be met with exception of two areas (staff utilisation and staff costs as a percentage of income) for which actions were being taken accordingly

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- with respect to staff utilisation additional timetabling had yet to be included for 16-19 Catch Up Funding and that this would be seen as an increase to the forecast presented
- for staff costs as a percentage of income reviews of contribution would be undertaken as part of the monitoring cycle to move towards maximising return on staff time.

The CFO stated that overall the Group was where it was expected to be recognising that 16-19 student numbers were in excess of the forecast and in relation to adult learners there was still work to do.

The CFO added that the Accounts presented an overall financially strong position adding that the financial forecast continued to be forecast to be “outstanding”.

Questions and comments from members were invited.

- A member commented on the new layout of report stating that they found the revised presentation very helpful.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and after due discussion and consideration it was resolved that the Management Accounts for the period to 31 October 2021 be approved.

COR/136/21 Merger Progress Update

The PCEO provided the Board with an update on the merger progress and referred members to the 3 previously circulated reports:

- The Merger Progress Report – December 2021
- an extra report in respect of a Merger Integration Update, reporting of which had also been made to the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee at its meeting on 19 November 2021
- the Post Merger Transition Plan

The PCEO further reported on progress made since the report had been written and highlighted the following:

- following discussions with the ESFA the indications were that they were content with the position in relation to the profiling of essential repairs and maintenance
- in respect of the issue raised around employee relations the PCEO and DP confirmed that a meeting had been held, earlier in the month, with staff from the Cheadle and Marple which had been very useful and constructive, during which a lot of staff questions had been answered.

Questions from members were invited.

- A question was asked by a member in relation to the Curriculum Area Development Reviews (CDARs) and whether the delays to these reviews had been resolved.

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The PCEO responded that the DP had met with the accredited trade unions (ATUs) and been able to provide clarification around aspects of the CDAR process as well as performance management.

There was confirmation that the DP had informally addressed these issues and that she would now be formally responding to the ATUs with a view to attaining closure.

There was confirmation that the Group would be in a position to proceed with CDARs in the new year.

Action: Deputy Principal

- A further question was asked by a member around Information Technology (IT) staffing and whether this had had an impact on the experience of students.

The PCEO responded that there was recognition there had been challenges across the Group and the Director of IT and Digital Services had met with the Heads of Studies to address any issues and concerns accordingly. There was confirmation that there had been no issues specific to Cheadle and Marple.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the merger progress update and accompanying reports be received and noted.

COR/137/21 Turnaround Director's Report – December 2021

The Turnaround Director (TD) presented a report which provided an updated overview of the latest financial plans compared to the business case; an update on the merger claim; and a stakeholder engagement update.

The TD provided an overview of the key issues arising from the report and concluded that good progress was being made in a number of areas and the actual financial position for 2020/2021 was better than the forecast position. It was further advised the forecast for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 were also better than the business case.

The TD further stated that the potential financial risks had been identified and mitigation plans were in place to address the identified risks.

Questions from members were invited.

- A comment was made by a member that in comparison to the Stockport College merger the progress being made post the Cheadle and Marple merger was encouraging to note.

The TD responded that the planning had been comprehensive and the process was progressing more smoothly. There was recognition that the Group had learnt from the Stockport College merger.

- A question was asked by a member in relation to the capital bid for the Cheadle College and the likely view of the Group's bankers (Barclays Bank) concerning the bid in the context of the Group's financial position.

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The TD responded that it was believed that Barclays would take into account the Group's financial position i.e. being better than the business case as well as the external funding support when undertaking their considerations

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the report from the Turnaround Director be received and noted.

COR/138/21 Financial Forecasting Return 2021/2023 and Finance Dashboard October 2021

The CFO referred members to the previously circulated information in relation to the Group's Financial Forecasting Return 2021/2023 and Finance Dashboard as at October 2021.

Members were reminded that the ESFA summary and responses related to the Group's submission of the College Finance Forecast Return (CFFR) which was submitted in July 2021.

The CFO outlined the key points to note from the ESFA summary and dashboard and highlighted the following:

- that the ESFA had not accepted the Group's request for moderation of the financial health grade from Outstanding to Good and therefore the financial health grade for 2020/2021 had moved from Good to Outstanding
- that the dashboard presented the progress of the Group from 2017/2018 onwards and movement toward financial viability with many measures now being within the National College median benchmarks
- confirmation that for the current academic year (2021/2022) the assessed grade for 2021/2022, based on the financial plan, was Good but was likely to be revised to Outstanding consistent with the cash balances currently being held.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the position in respect of the Financial Forecasting Return 2021/2023 and Finance Dashboard October 2021 be received and noted.

COR/139/21 Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework Update – December 2021

The CFO referred members to the previously circulated Board Assurance and Risk Management Framework (BARMF) update. There was confirmation that the report had been considered in detail by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 22 November 2021.

It was noted that the BARMF had undergone a major overhaul and it now aligned with the recently approved Strategic Plan 2021/2024.

The CFO highlighted the key headlines arising from BARMF and there was confirmation that future reporting and monitoring would focus on the high-risk items i.e. those with a score of above 15 or where there were risks that were deteriorating.

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There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Board the Assurance and Risk Management Framework Update 2021/2022 be received and noted.

COR/140/21 Draft Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 22 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting were received and the Chairperson of the Committee provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee which were duly noted.

COR/141/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chairperson of the Audit Committee confirmed that a number of items arising from the Minutes had been addressed earlier in the meeting.

The Chairperson further drew the Board of the Corporation's attention to the following additional issues:

- i) AUD/57/21 – Audit Tracker - Management Actions arising from Audit Reports

The Chairperson of the Committee confirmed that a revised process had been adopted for the tracking of all audit recommendations and for which an update report would be provided at each meeting of the Committee.

Action: Chief Finance Officer

- ii) AUD/59/21 – Value for Money Strategy 2021/2024

The Chairperson of the Committee reported that the Committee had given consideration to an updated Value for Money Strategy covering the period 2021 to 2024.

The Chairperson confirmed that the Strategy encompassed the key aspects of Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity.

There were no questions from members and the Board of the Corporation unanimously approved the Audit Committee's recommendation that the Value for Money Strategy 2021/2024 be approved and implemented.

Action: Chief Finance Officer

There were no further matters arising from the minutes.

COR/142/21 Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 9 October 2021

The minutes of the meeting were received and the Chairperson of the Committee provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee which were duly noted.

COR/143/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Minute No.**COR/144/21 Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee held on 15 October 2021**

The minutes of the meeting were received and the VPCSP provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee which were duly noted.

COR/145/21 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

COR/146/21 Annual Marketing and Marketing Share Report 2020/2021

The Director of Marketing and External Relations (DMER) referred members to the previously circulated Annual Marketing and Market Share for 2020/2021 academic year.

The DMER highlighted the revised approach compared to previous years and the issues associated with the availability of accurate 3-year trend data. It was noted that there had been challenges over the reliability of the data available for years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 and consequently analysis was based on data from 2020/2021. It was further stated that the report encompassed the newly formed Group following the merger that took place in May 2021.

There was recognition of the increase in 16-19 learner numbers alongside the impact of an increased birth rate which would start to level out in 2023/2024. It was further suggested that the pandemic had encouraged young people to stay in education and the DMER added that for 16-19 learners each of the colleges in the Group had clear identities and distinction in the cohorts.

The DMER highlighted the key themes of the report which were duly noted.

The PCEO, with reference to 2021/2022 16-19 learner numbers, commented that across the sector in general recruitment had been less positive than it had been for the Group with colleges suggesting that some of their catchment had been lost the sixth form sector.

Questions from members were invited.

- A member welcomed the interesting report and highlighted the statement made in relation to Higher Education its integration. The member asked what the timeline would be to enable the curriculum offer to be available for recruitment in September 2022.

The DMER responded that the curriculum planning process had commenced with a view to attaining sign off in the spring term 2022.

The DP commented that was a need for the Group to be more proactive, modular and employer informed in its curriculum offer. The DP also confirmed that an area that the Group was exploring was the development and promotion of a policing and criminology programme.

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- A member commented on the work that they undertook with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) stating that many employers lacked awareness of T levels.

The PCEO expanded upon the position in relation to the lack of awareness of T levels on the part of employers and the work that the Group was undertaking to raise their profile and educate employers, which included participation in a Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) initiative.

- A further comment was made by a member in respect of the commitment to provide 45 days of “on the job” experience during an industry placement and the need for this to be well planned.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the Annual Marketing and Market Share Report 2020/2021 be received and noted.

COR/147/21 Social Media Policy 2021/2023

The DMER referred members to the Social Media Policy 2021/2023 as circulated to members as part of the supporting documentation.

The DMER highlighted the role social media adding that the policy formalised the Group’s approach and management of social media.

There was confirmation that the Marketing Department managed all of the Group’s social media accounts consistent with their skills set and behaviours to manage the accounts.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Social Media Policy 2021/2023 be approved and implemented.

Action: Director of Marketing and External Relations

COR/148/21 COVID-19 Update

The PCEO referred members to the previously circulated report relating to the Covid-19 update and 16-19 Tuition Fund Statement.

The PCEO outlined the four main ways that the ongoing pandemic continued to impact the Group:

- dealing with the day-to-day practicalities and arrangements as part of its ongoing response to the pandemic
- addressing “education recovery” in terms of lost learning and lost personal, social and emotional development across the student population and school leavers in particular
- responding to significant volatility within the labour market and the impact of this, and the pandemic, on staff recruitment, retention, workload and well-being with vacancies across the Group currently standing at 70

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- managing relationships with key stakeholders in the context of the on-going pandemic, including employers, parents/carers, the local authority and the wider communities served.

Questions from members were invited.

- A member asked a question in respect of the emotional impact on learners and its wider ramifications. It was asked if there were any external sources of support that the Group could access.

The PCEO responded that whilst there was recognition of the issue it had been difficult to anticipate the extent and breadth of the impact. It was advised that a substantial number of colleges were encountering equivalent issues and moving forward there was a commitment to work together to proactively address issues, share approaches and attain common solutions.

- A member highlighted the immense amount of work undertaken by staff and the recorded the thanks of the Board for their efforts and input. The member further highlighted the in-house initiatives being pursued citing College Ready and Grow Your Own. It was stated that the imaginative ways staff had adopted when working with their students was to be commended.

The Chairperson endorsed the member's comments and requested that the thanks of the Board of Corporation be expressed to staff for their continued hard work and commitment. The PCEO undertook to include this within his briefing scheduled to take place the following day.

Action: Principal and CEO

A member reiterated that people were central to all the Group does and aspired to do and proposed that "People" feature as a specific section in future agendas to ensure that the important aspects such as recruitment and morale remained at the core of the Group's business.

The Chairperson proposed that section 4 of the agenda be amended to read "**People**, Performance, Curriculum and Quality". There was recognition that "People" related aspects were also considered in greater detail elsewhere including at meetings of the Resources Committee.

Action: Corporation Secretary

The PCEO highlighted the appended Tuition Fund statement which set out the how the Group would use its 16 to 19 tuition allocation (£0.5m) to support students who had been academically disadvantaged due to the impact of the pandemic.

An overview of the initiatives was presented within which the following was highlighted:

- the transition activities and workshops delivered as part of the College Ready Programme
- revision workshops for learners taking part in the November 2021 examination series

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- English and maths support
- increased capacity around tutorial support.

There was confirmation that there was a requirement to publish the Tuition Fund Statement on the Group's websites.

Action: Deputy Principal

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that:

- a) the Covid-19 update report be received and noted; and**
- b) the 16-19 Tuition Fund Statement for publication on the Group's websites be endorsed.**

COR/149/21 Strategic Plan 2021/2024 Update

The PCEO presented a verbal update on the Strategic Plan 2021/2024 and indicated there were two outstanding aspects which related to the Group's approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as well as Sustainability and the Environment.

There was confirmation that a Governor Strategic Away Day was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 9 March 2022 at there would be a focus on the shaping and development of the Group's approach to these two areas and the People Strategy.

Action: Principal and CEO

There were no questions or comments for members and it was resolved that the verbal update in respect of the Strategic Plan 2021/2024 be received and noted.

COR/150/21 People Strategy 2021/2024

The VPCSP reported that the People Strategy was normally refreshed on a three-year cycle however it had not been possible to revisit the strategy during the previous year and it was proposed that the current strategy be extended to the end of the current academic year pending the development of a new strategy.

The VPCSP added that the volume of work encountered by the Group alongside the impact of Covid-19 had been unprecedented and that there was a desire, in the formulation of a new and updated strategy, to ensure there was engagement with staff and that it accurately reflected their input and requirements.

It was further advised that the new strategy would maintain parity with the recently approved Strategic Plan 2021/2024 as well as addressing aspects such as the EDI Strategy, pay review, the merger and culture of the expanded Group.

Questions from members were invited.

- A member endorsed the approach being adopted highlighting the importance of aligning the purpose of employees with that of the business as well as addressing staff retention and attraction of new employees.

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The PCEO commented on the value of education and the satisfaction of working within the sector. Reference was made to the success of the recent Grow Your Own initiative via which 20 new colleagues had been recruited. There was recognition of the experience of the pandemic and a desire to “give something back”, an impact aspiration which could be built upon.

There were no further questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that the current People Strategy be extended by one further year with a new and updated Strategy being available for consideration and approval at the 27 July 2022 meeting of the Board of the Corporation.

Action: Vice Principal Corporate Services and Planning

COR/151/21 Key Performance Indicators Update Report – Autumn Term 2021

The PCEO referred members to the previously circulated Key Performance Indicators (KPI) update report and position statement in respect of the status of KPIs as at December 2021.

Members noted that there were some areas where reporting was not yet available and which would be populated as the academic year progressed.

The following emerging themes were highlighted:

- full-time HE numbers were below target but recruitment was at a higher level than the previous year
- the HE numbers were consistent with a small number of courses not having been recruited to and there was an expectation that at the end of the academic year the provision would be £30k adrift of target
- 16-19 recruitment was significantly above target and clarification was being sought from the ESFA in respect of in year growth
- application data for 2022/2023 was presenting a positive position however there was a need to convert the applications
- construction continued to be a growth area in terms of applications but there were challenges in terms of appropriate teacher recruitment.

The PCEO concluded that overall a positive position was evidenced and questions from members were invited.

- A member referenced the positive position in terms of those areas rag rated as “green” and added that it was also good to see that retention was currently relatively high. The member added that the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) indicated that there were some issues in relation to attendance, a precursor to the loss of students, and it was asked if there were any specific areas of concern.

The DP responded that English and maths attendance, consistent with the wider sector, were areas of concern.

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The DP outlined some of the actions being taken to tackle attendance which included writing to parents, utilising catch up funding and changing strategies around Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

In addition, it was stated that timetables were being reviewed to include an offer of later start times.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the KPI Update Report be received and noted.

COR/152/21 Draft Self-Assessment Report 2020/2021 and Quality Improvement Plan 2021/2022

The DP referred members to the previously circulated report and the Draft Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2020/2021 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2021/2022.

The DP confirmed that the SAR 2020/2021 and QIP 2021/22 had been validated by the Governors Validation Panel on 10 November 2021 and was subject to some minor amendments which had since been incorporated within the version presented to the Board of the Corporation for approval.

There was confirmation that the overall the SAR 2020/2021 had been graded as “good” in all Education Inspection Framework (EIF) aspects. The DP further indicated that post approval of the SAR by the Board of the Corporation there was a requirement for it to be uploaded to the Ofsted dashboard by the end of January 2022.

Members were referred to the summary of the 10 objectives identified in the QIP 2021/2022.

In respect of the QIP for 2021/2022 there was confirmation that a focused plan was presented addressing partially achieved areas of improvement from the previous year plus some new areas reflecting the Group’s current position, the needs of learners and the integration of Cheadle and Marple to the Group. There was confirmation that progress against the objectives would be monitored and reported on regularly during the course of the year.

Members were also reminded that the QIP was one of a number of improvement strategies employed by the Group.

Questions from members were invited.

- A member highlighted the progress monitoring of students that had been completed for Trafford and Stockport within which 63.3% of students were on or above target and asked whether this figure was normal at this point in the academic year. A further question was asked as to whether the key assessments for Cheadle and Marple were showing any difference to the Trafford and Stockport rates.

The DP responded that the position was lower but not significantly different from the previous year. It was added that teachers were being robust and very cautious

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in their approach, and in addition some of those learners who were not on target had been impacted upon by loss of learning.

Assurance was provided that those learners needing extra support had been identified and were receiving additional pastoral support together with the support provided as part of the catch-up funding initiatives.

With respect to the Cheadle and Marple results the DP indicated that summary information was not available but there was information at course level via which concerns were identified. It was added that overall the position was consistent with that for Trafford and Stockport.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the Self-Assessment Report 2020/2021 and Quality Improvement Plan 2021/2022 be approved, implemented and uploaded to the Ofsted data dashboard accordingly.

Action: Deputy Principal

COR/153/21 Minutes of the HE Curriculum and Quality Committee held on 9 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting were received and the Chairperson provided a brief overview of the business considered by the Committee which was duly noted.

COR/154/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

i) HEC&Q/35/21 – Access and Participation Plan 2022-2026

The Deputy Principal reported that approval was sought for the Access and Participation Plan (APP) prior to its submission to the Office for Students (OfS) in advance of February 2022.

There was confirmation that the APP had been subject to scrutiny by the Higher Education Curriculum and Quality Committee and further comments had also been received those members not in attendance at the meeting.

There was confirmation that the APP 2020-2026 presented no significant gaps in the Group's performance and where there were identified gaps these were actions in place to ensure their closure during the 5 years of the plan.

The focus of the APP was outlined and the aspects in relation to equality of opportunities for unrepresented Groups; assessment of performance; and access, attainment and progression were highlighted.

There were no questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Access and Participation Plan 2022-2026 be approved and submitted to the Office for Students accordingly.

Action: Deputy Principal

ii) HEC&Q/37/21 - Draft Higher Education Skills Strategy 2021-2024

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The PCEO reported that the Committee had given consideration to the Draft Higher Education Skills Strategy 2021-2024 (DHESS) and referenced the objectives and five areas covered.

The PCEO confirmed that the Strategy was largely in response to government priorities and the direction of travel of the Skills for Jobs White Paper which presented an opportunity for the sector to drive forward the agenda.

The PCEO further outlined the work that was taking place across Greater Manchester around a city-based approach to Level 4 and 5 provision. It was noted that collectively there were no gaps in provision and that where gaps emerged a college was identified to address the issues. The PCEO stated that the aspiration was to present the collective offer as the 5th university in Greater Manchester underpinned by a common prospectus.

The PCEO also commented that had been potential to access monies of up to £4.5m to develop L4 and L5 provision for which 2 collaborative bids had been submitted. It was noted that neither bid had been successful, however the GMCA had put forward alternative monies and were seeking make available up to £5m for funding bids.

It was noted that local Vice Chancellors were supportive of the approach and had there was a willingness to collaborate to provide clear pathways from L3 onwards.

Questions from members were invited.

- A member highlighted the synergy with the Group's Strategic Plan and Employer Strategy.

There were no further questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Draft Higher Education Skills Strategy 2021-2024 be approved and implemented.

Action: Principal and CEO

There were no further matters arising from the minutes.

COR/155/21 Minutes of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee Meeting held on 10 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting were received and the Chairperson of the Committee provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee.

COR/156/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chairperson reported that the Committee had given detailed consideration to a suite of strategies and policies and confirmed that the Committee duly recommended approval by the Board of the Corporation of the following policies and strategies.

- Student Engagement Strategy and Implementation Plan 2021/2023
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy 2021/2023

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- Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy 2021/2023
- English and Maths Strategy 2021/2023.

There were no questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that the above listed policies and strategies be approved and implemented:

Action: Deputy Principal

There were no further actions arising from the minutes.

COR/157/21 Minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee held on 3 December 2021

The minutes of the meeting were received and the VPCSP provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee.

COR/158/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The VPCSP highlighted the 9 March 2022 Governor Strategic Development Day which would include consideration of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy. The VPCSP outlined the approach adopted to the development of strategy including input from staff and students via focus groups.

There were no further matters arising from the minutes.

COR/159/21 Minutes of the Safeguarding Committee Meetings held on 7 October 2021 and 18 November 2021

The minutes of the meetings were received and the Deputy Principal provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee.

COR/160/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

A member confirmed their attendance at the Committee meetings and highlighted the number of staff involved and the complexities in terms of the cases being dealt with.

Attention was drawn to the extensive actions arising from the meetings of the Safeguarding Committee.

Questions from members were invited.

- A member asked what support was made available to staff dealing complex and traumatic cases.

The VPCSP made reference to the introduction of a mental health first aiders scheme which facilitated signposting as appropriate to both counselling and the further support services available to staff. The work also taking place with the Samaritans was also highlighted.

There were no further matters arising from the minutes.

Minute No.**COR/161/21 Governor Link Reports**

Members were referred to the previously circulated reports arising from link visits and learning walks. Reports were received in respect of the following areas:

- Altrincham Campus
- Stockport Campus
- Cheadle Campus
- Marple Campus
- Apprenticeships
- Students' Personal Development
- Quality of Education
- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Digital Skills

The Chairperson thanked members and staff involved in the visits and questions were invited.

There were no questions and after due consideration it was resolved that the reports arising from link visits and learning walks be received and noted.

COR/162/21 Updated Governor Links

The Deputy Corporation Secretary (DCS) referred members to the previously circulated report and an update on the Governor Links for 2021/2022.

The following changes were highlighted:

- the addition of a new link area Environmental Sustainability (Louise Richardson)
- an additional Link Governor to the area of Higher Education (Fatema Desai)
- the addition of a new Link Governor to Equality and Diversity including SEND (Marcia Reynolds)
- the addition of a new Link Governor to Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults (Adele Carney).

There were no questions or comments from members and following due consideration the updated Link Governor arrangements for 2021/2022 was approved.

COR/163/21 Draft Governance Self-Assessment Report 2020/2021 and Updated Governance Action Plan 2021/2022

The DCS referred members to the final draft of the Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2020/2021 and accompanying updated Governance Action Plan for 2021/2022.

It was noted that the Governance SAR had been considered by the Governance SAR Validation Panel at which it had been subjected to robust discussion. Attention was drawn to the new actions and reworded elements of the Action Plan.

Minute No.

The Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation also highlighted the new sections in respect of Safeguarding and EDI as well as Sustainability and Climate Control.

There were no questions or comments made by members and following due consideration the Governance Self-Assessment Report 2020/2021 and Action Plan 2021/2022 were approved.

Action: Corporation Secretary

COR/164/21 Minutes of the Search Committee held on 3 November 2021

The minutes of the meetings were received and the Chairperson provided a brief overview of the business items considered by the Committee.

COR/165/21 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- i) SEA/06/21 – Appointment of Independent Members to the Board of the Corporation

The Chairperson confirmed that following the merger with CAMSFC the size of the Board of the Corporation the number of independent members had increased from 17 to 19 with the increase having been met by the transfer of 2 members from the CAMSFC Board.

It was further confirmed that terms of office of 5 current members of the Board of the Corporation were due to expire from which 3 members had indicated that they did not wish to be considered for a further term of office.

The Chairperson reported that the Committee were in agreement that the appointment of Marcia Reynolds, who had completed the Governor Ready Programme, be recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval. There was confirmation that the applicant had a background in local government and teaching and learning.

There were no questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that Marcia Reynolds be appointed as an Independent Member of the Board of the Corporation for a four- year term of office.

Action: Corporation Secretary

The Chairperson further reported that the JH and LR had applied for a further term of office and that taking into account their contribution, performance, skills set and roles held on the Board it was unanimously recommended to the Board of the Corporation that their term of office be extended for a further four years.

There were no questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that the terms of office of Jed Hassid and Louise Richardson as Independent Members of the Board of the Corporation be extended by a further four years.

Action: Corporation Secretary

Minute No.

There were no further matters arising.

COR/166/21 Appointments to the Board of the Corporation – Meeting of the Governors Appointments Panel 15 December 2021

The Chairperson provided an overview of the meeting of the Appointments Panel and the recommendations arising.

With respect to the 2 vacancies under consideration it was reported 12 applications had been received of which 2 had been invited to meet with the Governors Appointment Panel. There was confirmation that consideration had been given to the applicants' profiles, skills, knowledge and experience in relation to the requirements of the Board of the Corporation.

The Chairperson reported that the Appointments Panel recommended the following appointments to the Board of the Corporation:

- Fatema Desai who has experience in Higher Education who it was proposed would be a member of the Higher Education Curriculum and Quality Committee
- Adele Carney, who had extensive experience of safeguarding in the Further Education and a wider context and who it was proposed would be the nominated Safeguarding Governor.

There were no questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that Fatema Desai and Adele Carney be appointed as Independent Members of the Board of the Corporation each for a four-year term of office. The Governor Link proposals were also approved.

Action: Corporation Secretary

COR/167/21 Letter from FE Commissioner to Principals and Chairs

The PCEO referred members to the previously circulated recent letter from the FE Commissioner to Principals and Chairs.

There was confirmation that the letter indicated a commitment to the building of more supportive relationships with colleges and further highlighted the proposals being agreed through Funding and Accountability consultation and funded training programmes via the Education and Training Foundation (ETF).

There was confirmation that both the PCEO and CFO were currently benefitting from the ETF training programmes.

There were no questions or comments from members and it was resolved that the letter from the FE Commissioner dated 3 November 2021, be received and noted.

COR/168/21 AoC Code of Good Governance 2022 Update and White Paper – Skills for Jobs Governance Requirements

Minute No.

The DCS reported that it was proposed that the Chairperson and CS meet early in the New Year with a view to assessing the impact in terms of governance requirements arising from both the AoC Code of Good Governance and the Skills for Jobs White Paper.

It was confirmed that following the assessment and determination of their impact from a governance perspective the CS would contact governors via email to seek their support and approval around their adoption.

There no were questions or comments from members and the position in respect of the AoC Code of Governance and Skills for Jobs White Paper, in terms of their impact from a governance perspective, be noted and proposed actions endorsed.

Action: Chairperson/Corporation Secretary

COR/169/21 Whistleblowing Policy 2021-2023

The VPCSP reported that following a review of the Group's Whistleblowing Policy there were no significant changes proposed with the exception of updated terminology and the inclusion of a policy statement.

There were no questions or comments from members and following due consideration it was resolved that the updated Whistleblowing Policy 2021/2023 be approved and implemented.

Action: Vice-Principal Corporate Services and Planning

COR/170/21 Any Other Business

- i) Request for approval of quotations where up to 5 quotations had not been secured

The CFO presented a request from the Director of Finance in respect of 3 instances in which there had been an inability to secure the required 5 quotations as per the Group's Financial Regulations. It was noted that the quotes related to merger grant purchase orders.

The CFO provided full details of each of the requests together with a justification for the approval of the quotations.

There were no questions or comments from members and following due consideration the respective quotations and their award as outlined were approved.

- ii) Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Part 1 and the Group's Safeguarding Policy

The DCS reminded members that they had been requested to confirm via email that they had read the KCSIE document and Group's Safeguarding Policy. The Chairperson added that it was mandatory for all governors to have read these documents. The DCS undertook to recirculate the request.

Minute No.**Action: Deputy Corporation Secretary**

iii) Retirements

The Chairperson reported that Kurt Allman was retiring as a governor following 8 years of service to the Board of the Corporation. The Chairperson recorded the thanks of the Board of the Corporation for the service and support provided during his period of office.

The Chairperson further reported the retirement of Keith Linton, Director of Premises, who had been with the Group for a substantial period of time. Members wished Mr Linton well for the future.

There were no further items raised under any other business.

COR/171/21 Date of the Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Board of the Corporation would be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 30 March 2022.

Members were further reminded of the Governor Dinner scheduled to take place on 27 January 2022 and the Governor Strategic Development Day scheduled to take place on 9 March 2022.

Action: Corporation Secretary

Michael Speight (Mazars) left the meeting at 5.52pm following consideration of agenda item 2d.

Nivi Muthukumar and Michael Frankish (Grant Thornton) left the meeting at 6.08pm following consideration of agenda item 2g.

Alison Hewitt and Fatma Shami left the meeting at 6.33pm following consideration of item agenda item 3a.

Lina Tsui-Cheung left the meeting at 7.00pm following consideration of agenda item 4c.

Sabine Van Der Veer and the Carl Miles (Director of Marketing and External Relations) left the meeting at 7.20pm following consideration of agenda item 4e.

Janet Grant left the meeting at 7.43pm following consideration of agenda item 4m.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.