

**Minutes of a Meeting of LSEC Corporation held on  
Thursday 13 July 2023 from 5.30-7.30pm  
in person at Orpington Campus Room C1/C2**

**Corporation Governors**

David Eastgate (DE)	Chair
Louise Nadal (LN)	Vice Chair APOLOGIES
Dr Sam Parrett, CBE (SP)	Group CEO
Mark Trinick (MT)	Governor
Lucie Allen (LA)	Governor (LEAVING AT 7PM)
David Bailey (DB)	Governor
Joanne Bell (JB)	Governor (APOLOGIES)
Angela Hands (AH)	Governor
Mark Burnett (MB)	Governor NO SHOW
Vince Fihosy (VF)	Governor
Tony Gilbey (TG)	Governor (APOLOGIES)
Kate Shiner (KS)	Governor
Sarah Lewis (SL)	Governor (APOLOGIES)
Darren Kirwin	Co-opted Governor
Maz Potts/Teresa Langford	Staff Governors
Monesse Lambert	Student Governors (FE and HE) (to be appointed)

**Governance Professional & Clerk to the Board**

Jennifer Pharo (JP)	Group Chief Governance & Administration Officer
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**Executive Officers in attendance**

John Hunt (JHu)	Group Deputy CEO & Group CFO
Asfa Sohail (AS)	Deputy CEO & Principal

**Officers in attendance for specific items**

Philida Schellens	External Adviser (Item 4.3)
Janet Curtis Broni	Group Chief People Officer (Items 4.7 & 4.8)
Andy Simpson	Group Director Estates (Item 5.2)

**Board Papers Published on Board Intelligence on 6 July 2023**

- **Board Pack excludes Reading Room Items**
- **Reading Room Items only Pack**

**Minutes**

**Responsible**

**1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest**

**Chair-DE**

Apologies received from Louise Nadal, Sarah Lewis, Tony Gilbey, Joanne Bell, Mark Burnett

**1.1 Governor Appointments**

**For Approval**

**JP**

The Corporation **APPROVED** the appointment of Darren Kirwin from Co-opted C&S Governor to Governor and George Ryan as a Governor from 1 September 2023

The Corporation expressed thanks to Lucy Butler, Monesse Lambert (Student Governor) and Chinyama Okunuga who had resigned as Governors.

**2. Minutes & Action Log**

**2.1 Minutes of 11May 2023 & Action Log**

The Minutes of the previous meeting were APPROVED.

**2.2 Committee Chair's Summaries (Verbal)**

**For Monitoring**

The Committee Chairs/Members provided a verbal update on the latest meetings.

Curriculum & Standards– advised that discussions at the meeting had been centred around preparations for Ofsted, progress reviews across all provision type and ages. The TLA Policy was also reviewed and recommended.

Audit & Risk – advised that the Committee had completed a deep dive into capital projects and reviewed a number of the planned audits that had taken place. The committee also discussed the recent audit on the SCR. The Committee reviewed and recommended the Board Assurance Framework, Group Risk Management Policy Framework and the 23/24 Internal Audit Plan.

Finance – advised that the Committee had reviewed the 23/24 budget and three-year plan which were recommended for approval. The committee had reviewed and questioned the impact of multiple pressures on cash and recommended the Financial Regulations for approval.

**3.1 Group CEO Report**

[Reading Room](#) Appendix 1 External Policy Update

[Reading Room](#) Appendix 2: AOC Summary Update

[Reading Room](#) Appendix 3 Letter to Rt Hon Robert Halfon

Appendix 4 : AoC Manifesto – Opportunity England Executive Summary

Group CEO presented the report and detailed appendices, which were taken as read and noted.

The following key points were raised and discussed.

It was reported that a key issue was challenges with staff recruitment and retention, rising vacancies and unaffordable pay demands.

It was reported that FE staff are being poached and enticed by schools, where pay is better. It was reported that Secretary of State had announced some provision with an increase in 16-18 base rate funding for FE providers. This will help to plug the gap and increase lecturer pay but will not wholly match the gap.

It was reported that at the time of reporting, c22 courses were impacted by staff vacancies, overall there was c100 vacancies to fill for September 2023 both delivery and support.

It was reported that solutions to deliver more efficiently with larger group sizes . Using immersive classrooms and AI solutions would be a consideration but were not well enough advanced and there was a risk to student experience.

It was reported that vacancies and recruitment was being managed well and lots of reward initiatives have been introduced to demonstrate value placed in loyal and long-standing staff, including Long Service Awards for 10, 15 and 20 years' service.

In response to other factors impacting on pay awards and income, it was reported that the FE Sector remains underfunded, and on an unequitable footing in comparison to Schools, around VAT and pension costs.

**Board Questions and Comments**

In response to questions from the Board on whether it was just around pay, it was reported that some lecturers had returned to industry and workload was an issue in some areas. Providing incentives and rewards was one method to secure retention.

In response to questions from the Board around other incentive levers, it was reported that hybrid working for teachers was also a proposal. This was not an option currently in relation to delivery staff.

Its response to further questions from the Board on workload and recognition it was reported that wellbeing and work loading were key discussion areas for managers and a solution to stemming the flow of staff.

In response to questions from the Board it was reported that the wellbeing day recently awarded had been appreciated.

In response to questions around utilisation it was reported that staff were expected to provide up to 3 hours cover. Utilisation was reported at the end of current year, under 95% against an FEC benchmark of 98%.

In response to questions from the Board, it was reported that Executive were meeting with the unions for discussions on pay and workloads.

In response to questions from the Board with regard to transparency and communication, it was reported that staff are being informed of challenges around recruitment and ongoing work to reduce vacancies.

The Board received feedback from the staff governor that some staff feel there is a lack of concern that good staff have resigned, in response the Executive confirmed that in most cases resigning staff were asked if there was anything the College could do to change their mind and in many cases staff had changed their mind. It was reported that staff are loyal and like to work at LSEC.

In response to questions from the Board on incentive schemes like refer a family or friend it was reported that an initiative had been launched with minimal impact.

In response to comments from the Board with regard to working with employers and co delivery with specialist employers retraining as lecturers or instructors it was reported that the College would be open to any initiatives involving delivery supported by employers.

In response to questions around Alumni support, retired professionals and partners it was reported that these areas had been considered and would be revisited.

It was reported that with regard to the land in dispute at Rookery Lane with the Norman Family, it was confirmed that after some negotiation, Dr Norman was prepared to agree in principle to the transfer of the bottom plot of land and the Norman Estates would keep the front end of the land. This was a compromise but at least some of the land had been secured for the College.

### 3.2 Local Skills Improvement Fund

**Reading Room:** Application Part A & B

It was reported that the Local Skills Improvement Fund Guidance was published in May and outlined the two-stage application process through which collaborations of providers could apply for funding. It was reported that the fund is to be used to help deliver skills provision to meet Local Skills Improvement Plan priorities of London and of the sub region in which partners operate.

In this round of funding, £6,540,771 has been allocated over two years from April 2023 to April 2025 with a split in capital and revenue funding for use in the designated Local London Sub region, covering Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Enfield, Greenwich, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest and Bromley.

It was reported that LSEC had been selected by partners to be the lead applicant because of our successful leadership of the Strategic Development fund earlier this year. It was reported that LSEC had been asked to be a project lead within the collaboration, along with Newham College in the North. An Expression of Interest signed by all collaboration partners and endorsed by ERB Business LDN had been submitted by the deadline of 20th June with 23 participating skills providers across FE, Adult Education providers, Independent Training providers and Higher Education.

The Board were advised that to support the process, 100K mobilisation funding was available to enable the development of a full application this summer.

The Board endorsed the application and **NOTED** the report.

**4.1 Executive Principal Report**

Appendix 1: KPI Scorecard/Dashboard

**Reading Room:** TLA Policy & Learning Policy

The Board received the report from the Executive Principal and CLO which was taken as read.

It was reported that the College has been preparing for an Ofsted Inspection, but its focus remains on offering a great learning experience to our learners. Ofsted readiness was now in full progress with key college managers leading on various aspects of the Ofsted inspection identified and trained, including board members who will be receiving targeted training in early Autumn,

It was reported that there had also been Ofsted preparation briefings and deep dives training for subcontracted provision.

It was reported that work with external consultants continues, to validate strengths and identify areas for development. In addition, the College is working with an outstanding provider to further develop its practices to offer an exceptional learning experience to our learners.

The quality team continues to be leading on an Ofsted Readiness Plan which will be supported by other teams across the College. Further internal and external support is being injected to achieve consistently good teaching, learning and assessment.

The Board were advised that retention rates were higher than last year even though attendance rates have declined. It was reported that destination rates were also high at 86%.

It was reported that learners' retention and assessment submissions to date confirm that there continues to be very good performance in SEND, ESOL and Services Industries department. There are also further improvements in the apprenticeship provision, HE, most of the Creative Arts provision, and a wide range of STEM courses.

Areas of concern were reported as STEM (plumbing and electrical courses), English & Maths lessons, the provision of learning support, tutorial offer and courses within the employability and innovation department.

The Board were advised that Apprenticeship Achievement rates in 2021/22 had declined which was disappointing however following the release of the first national achievement rates since COVID it was confirmed that the end of year position was improved and in line with national levels.

It was reported that throughout 2022/23 a range of strategies have been implemented to reverse last year's decline and an external consultant had provided support to this team in addition to the internal review meetings with the Deputy Principals. It was reported that the target achievement rates for 2022/23 is 58%, which is in line with our plans to increase to 67% by 2026. Current year achievement rates were 39% with forecast of 58% confirmed.

It was also reported that there has been significant increase in apprenticeship attendance rates at 85%.

The Board were advised that following the publication of the new Apprenticeship Accountability framework, the provision is currently forecasting to be in the "Needs improvement" category for the main quality indicators and "OK" in all supplementary indicators.

It was reported that as clear improvements plans were already in place, the provision would move to “OK” in all indicators in 2023/24. The Board were advised that a review had been conducted by the ESFA with a light touch monitoring against withdrawals and apprentices past planned end dates.

The Board were advised that the HE Strategy was now in its second year, following its launch in January 2021. It was reported the two DfE Funded HTQs had been validated with delivery spaces identified at Orpington Campus. It was reported that recruitment to HE remains a priority with collaborative work with internal FE departments continues with progression events for level three students in progress. It was confirmed that collaborations with the Apprenticeship and Business Development teams continues to support the implementation of blended learning programmes in CIPD L3 and 5 and ILM.

It was reported that student voice remains positive particularly in support of teaching and learning and student support.

The Board were advised that the curriculum planning process had been developed for the 2023/24 curriculum offer, in collaboration with Finance, HR and MIS to ensure all deadlines are achievable for processing and budget setting, while ensuring time is built in to review labour market intelligence, job saturation data and market share. It was reported that the process had concluded with Timetables being finalised for the next academic year.

The Board were advised that the Accountability Agreement presented had been slightly revised from the previous version. The Board were asked to approve the revised version for submission.

It was reported that enrolment plans for 2023/24 were in place. To address the shortfall in current year targets for youth learners and it was reported that induction and student experience had been improved to mitigate.

It was reported that the AEB was on target to achieve 97% funding within the 3% tolerance levels. HE recruitment was reported to have ended at 109 learners below target with recovery strategies not progressing. Apprenticeship recruitment was also reported behind target by c200 starts, it was reported that work continues, to retain more learners and achieve savings against the shortfall.

It was reported that applications for both FE and HE provision for 2023/24 are improved on same period as previous year.

It was reported that student surveys had been conducted throughout the period, engagement in surveys was reported as improving with students confirming they feel safe in college.

It was reported that Mental Health and wellbeing concerns continued to make up approximately 60% of safeguarding referrals, in line with previous academic years.

It was reported that there was an increase in anti-social behaviour and concerns regarding serious youth violence and Child Criminal Exploitation. Additional safety campaigns had been completed in tutorials with a summer safety theme.

It was reported that a review of Career Advantage had been completed with new modules introduced and planned for September.

The Board were advised that the SCR had been audited by the Executive Principal and Deputy Principal Student Experience and Safeguarding and had identified areas for improvement and an external audit have been commissioned to provide assurances to SLT and Governors.

The Board we assured that Safeguarding practices continue to be a strength with increased training for staff planned for next year. The Board were advised that DBS renewals process for staff had been changed with renewals to take place every three years. It was reported that auditing and scrutiny of safer recruitment practices had increased and the Executive Principal and Deputy Principal Student Experience and Safeguarding, had completed regular audits and have had an external audit completed by Scruton Bland.

The Board received the Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy for approval. It was reported that there had been significant consultation on the policy, which included changes to coaching support, assessment feedback and timely support through the coaching model, 2 days' notice over a 2-day window to observe and two formal lesson visits for new staff.

It was also reported that the learning philosophy framework will be implemented to drive 3Is (Inspire, Innovate, and Improve) and create a supporting framework for TLA

### **Board Questions and Comments**

The Board questioned the continued work on the SCR and requested assurance on its completion,.

The Board **NOTED** the progress on retention and achievement against targets

The Board **NOTED** the development of the curriculum and **APPROVED** the revised Accountability Agreement for submission.

The Board **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the TLA Policy as presented.

The Board **NOTED** the change to the DBS renewal process for staff.

## **4.2 Curriculum Planning and Skills**

**Reading Room:** Appendix 1: Accountability Agreement

**Reading Room:** Appendix 2 Curriculum Strategy

The Board received an update on the Curriculum Strategy and planning alongside the Accountability Agreement.

It was reported that the Curriculum strategy had been previously received and approved by the Board. It was reported that the strategy was ready for publication and that a framework to monitor and evaluate progress against the Accountability Statement and Curriculum Strategy goals had been put in place.

The Board **NOTED** the report and **APPROVED** the revised Accountability Agreement for submission. .

**4.3 Ofsted Readiness: Preparations**  
IQR Review Presentation (Verbal)

**For Monitoring**

**AS/PS**

The Board received a presentation by the Independent Quality Reviewer on Ofsted Readiness.

It was reported that the presentation would be uploaded to Board Intelligence.

The Board questioned and discussed the appropriateness of T-Levels for the profile of student presenting.

The Board discussed and questioned qualification reform more widely and the impact on students, particularly those who had not achieved 5 GCSEs and the increasing widening participation for disadvantaged students.

The presentation outlined areas of improvement, as attendance, TLA, back to basics teaching and using simple concept.

It was reported that there was good use of assessment and good vocational practitioners at LSEC.

There was also evidence of good working relationships between English and Maths and Additional Learning Support.

In response to questions on the quality of teaching in English and Maths, it was reported as Good. Where Century 21 has been used it was reported that there had been some improvement.

In response to questions around inconsistency in TLA, it was reported that there was variable teaching in English and Maths. Communication between vocational and English and maths areas needs improved communication.

It was reported that confidence building in maths was a key component to success.

In response to questions on observation of TLA, it was reported that there would continue to be professional discussions and training and development to improve this.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

**4.7 Safeguarding Update**

**Reading Room:** 2023/24 Safeguarding Policy

The Safeguarding policy was presented for approval and discussion. Safeguarding had been discussed within the Executive Principals update.

It was further reported that there had been an increase in preventative safeguarding messages through tutorial provision and an increase in enrichment and campaign activities.

It was reported that there have been five LADO referrals to date this academic year.



It was reported that recorded safeguarding concerns are in line with previous academic years.

It was reported that changes to the policy included the introduction of anonymous reporting.

The Board **APPROVED** the Policy

#### **4.7 People and Resources**

Appendix 1 HR Dashboard

The Board received the report and HR Dashboard. It was reported that the Board had discussed at length the current recruitment and retention staffing issues.

##### **Questions and Comments**

In response to questions on sickness, it was reported that there are staff are long term sick which does impact on workloads.

In response to questions on sickness reporting, the board were advised that the Sickness Policy had been revised and was currently with unions for consultation.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

#### **4.8 EDI Update**

Appendix 1 EDI Scorecard

[Reading Room](#) Appendix 2 & 3 Profiles

[Reading Room](#) Appendix 4 EDI Calendar

The Board received the EDI report from Group CPO which was taken as read.

The Report summarised the progress against EDI objectives.

It was reported that good progress has been made against the objectives. This included increased staff disclosure rates, improved rates of EDI training with menopause awareness for Managers implemented.

It was reported that throughout this academic year, staff and students have been engaging in EDI activities. Staff, students and external stakeholders have been informed of our progress with and EDI sites set up on TEAMS, and SharePoint.

It was reported that further positive action in recruitment and talent management strategies for areas of under representation has been implemented resulting in an increase of black/Asian/mixed heritage staff by 27%, and 19.7% females.

The Board were advised that an increase in Black/Asian/Mixed Heritage/ Ethnic Minorities in middle management had increased by 6%.

EDI deep dives were reported in disciplinarys concluding that most were resolved at stage 1 (using the restorative approach), It was reported that all SARS/QUIPs now have EDI objectives.

It was reported that Group profile training has also been provided to teaching practitioners, during CPD week in July 2023.

The Board were advised that the full EDIMS for student outcomes will be available in October.

It was reported that the College continues to work Black Leadership Group, the AOC, our local Councils, and other external parties to share and adopt good practice. The College had also maintained Stonewall Silver accreditation, this 2023.

The Board were advised that the narrative on “Equality” has also changed to become “Equity” reinforcing the recognition and understanding that each person, is an individual with different circumstances and therefore the diversity of resources and opportunities needed/required, to reach an equal outcome.

The Board **NOTED** the report and update.

## **Section 5: Financial and Risk Management, Compliance and Controls**

**GCFO**

### **5. Group Chief Finance Officer Report**

#### **5.1 2022/23 Financial Update**

[Reading Room: Appendices 1-4](#)

The Board received a financial update from the Group CFO in the form of a presentation and a detailed report and appendices which was taken as read.

The Board were advised that the Management Accounts for the period ended 30 April 2023 reported a forecast full year adjusted operating position for the year prior to FRS102 charges as unchanged and in line with budget, at surplus of £213k.

It was reported that there were still some risks to meeting all income targets and costs for estates and exams.

Board were advised that the annual letter from the ESFA for July 2022 reported outstanding financial health. The Governors Dashboard was provided in the Board Pack to reflect this and also performance of the college against key financial indicators.

The Board were advised that the DFE had published details of the Loan Scheme to replace commercial borrowing facilities. Due to timing criteria and evidence on cashflow required, the College was not in a position to apply in this application window.

It was reported that the college utilised a managed treasury service provided by Kingswood Institutional, and whilst the returns were small during periods of very low interest rate, these are now picking up significantly with the current rate increases, a detailed appendix of the portfolio was provided.

The Board welcomed the approach to presenting the financial performance information and **NOTED** the report.

## 5.2 Property & Capital Update

The Board received a detailed update on capital programmes from Group Director Estates which was taken as read.

It was reported that the capital works programme was valued at c£78m across both Colleges and the Trust.

It was reported that single significant risk was capacity to deliver on time to a high quality,

An update on Future Greenwich was provided, advising the Board that the land sale was complete, and the College was now drawing down payments aligned to the contract timings schedule. It was reported that demolition was almost complete on site, enabling the LSEC retained land and L&Q phase 1 land to be separated.

The new College construction remained as programmed to commence in Autumn 2023, targeting a September 2025 opening. Buoyancy and inflation remain in the construction sector at this time and the proposed tender process is the next stage of providing greater cost certainty.

It was reported that the FETCF Bromley Campus capital programme was progressing well. The Board were advised that a £6m capital grant for the transformation of STEM block had been granted.

An update on Orpington Boiler House was provided, with London Borough of Bromley continuing to take an evasive approach to meeting their repairing obligations under the plant room lease. It was reported that lease extensions by agreement continue, in an attempt to avoid a formal dispute.

### Board Questions and Comments

In response to resourcing issues, it was reported that consultants and project management companies were being pushed to provide us with more capacity. Internal skilled staff were also being made available and appointed.

In response to questions on changes to the programme it was confirmed that only GCFO and Group Director Estates can make changes to the programme.

In response to counter party risk query it was confirmed that credit and financial checks, include payment of supply chains and whole range of other measures, which are assessed and reviewed by GCFO and Group Director Estates.

Board **NOTED** that monitoring and early visibility was required to assess when this may become an issue.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

## 5.3 2023/24 Budget

**Recommended by Group Finance Committee**

[Reading Room](#): Appendices 2-6

The Board received a detailed report with appendices and presentation from Group CFO on the 2023/24 budget which was taken as read.

The 2023/24 Budget had been recommended for approval by the Group Finance Committee.

Key issues identified and reported to the Board included that the budget for 2023/24 provided for a breakeven operating position but achieving this represents a risk in the current climate with the budget being extremely challenging.

It was reported that the College Financial Health was budgeted to be Good for 2023/24, but performance will be below some FE Commissioner Benchmarks.

The Board were also advised that some income streams for 2023/24 may be at risk due to the possibility of enrolment targets not being achieved

It was reported that the College budgeted pay award was likely to be insufficient to avoid industrial action.

### **Questions and Comments**

In response to questions it was reported that the budget was very tight if income targets are not met, and savings not realised. Estates costs are still rising.

In response to questions regarding the future financial health it was reported that if the GLA required repayment of the LATC grant which was unconfirmed at the time of reporting, financial health will decline.

In response to questions regarding stress testing it was reported that stress testing had been applied to revenue but not to capital. It was reported that cash would not be an issue until 2024/25. ACTION: Board recommended stress testing on 2024/25 budget both revenue and capital.

In response to questions on cash flow it was reported that cash flows are not yet available for Future Plumstead and FECTF Bromley capital programmes, but would be provided.

The Board **APPROVED** the Budget for 2023/24 as recommended.

## **5.4 2023/24 Three Year Financial Forecast**

**Recommended by Group Finance Committee**

[Reading Room](#) Appendices 2-6

The Board received a detailed report with appendices and presentation from Group CFO on the Three-year financial forecast which was taken as read.

The Three-Year Financial Forecast had been recommended for approval by the Group Finance Committee.

The following key points were presented on the three-year financial plan

- The Education Specific EBITDA is expected to reduce from £2.67m in 2022/23 to £2.59m in 2023/24 and will remain at circa £2.6m each year after efficiency savings.
- Efficiency savings of circa £0.85m and £0.2m were expected to be required in 2024/25 and 2025/26 respectively, in order to achieve the above.
- Major capital expenditure and receipts in respect of the Future Greenwich and the FECTF development programmes were included in the plan, together with the post 16 Capacity fund, FECTF Phase 3 of £3.99m and £1.3m respectively and other smaller capital bids of projects.

- The FE capital reclassification grant of £1.1m received in 2022/23 will be used as FECTF match funding to balance our cashflow requirements in 2023/24 to ensure financial health of the College does not decline to Requires Improvement.
- A liability in respect of repayment of the LATC £856k capital grant exists, but we are working on a business case to avoid repayment which would result in the financial health declining to Requires Improvement
- Cash balances are expected to be £8.4m by July 2025, before increasing very slightly each year.
- Cash is expected to be a limiting factor for the business for at least the next 5 years with our period of major capital investment.
- The financial health points score will be 'Good' for each year of the plan, but the points score will be at the bottom of the threshold after 2024/25. Under the current methodology.

The Board discussed the implications and impact of return of LATC grant to GLA may result in requirement to lease IT equipment and kit.

The Board **APPROVED** the Three-Year Plan as recommended

## 5.5 Financial Policies

**Recommended by Group Finance Committee**

[Reading Room](#) LSEC Financial Regulations

The Board received the Financial Regulations as presented by the GCFO, which had been recommended by Group Finance Committee for Approval

It was reported that the Financial Regulations had been reviewed for 2023/24 and a number of changes have been made.

Many of the changes relate to post titles and other minor grammatical and administrative alterations.

It was reported that although the College financial regulations were recently updated in response to guidance issued following reclassification, further changes have been made in this regard since the DfE appear to require Colleges to document more of the amended requirements within its own policies. In this regard, the Board was advised that amendments have been made to add content covering matters such as the College may not utilise overdraft facilities or new commercial loans.

The Board was also advised that a new section on procurement to cover expected changes to the Academies Financial Handbook in respect of related party transaction restrictions between the College and LSEAT had been added. .

It was reported that these changes have been drafted by our legal advisors in order to facilitate greater future use of transactions between group entities.

The Board **APPROVED** the Financial Regulations.

## 5.6 Risk Register

Appendix 1: Ranked Risk Register

[Reading Room](#) Appendix 2: High Risk Individual Entries

[Reading Room](#): Appendix 3: Risk Scoring Matrix

The Board received the updated Risk Register and report as presented by the GCFO and as reviewed by Group Audit & Risk Committee.

It was reported that since the risk register was considered by the Corporation in March, it has been subject to a review by risk owners and the Group Executive. This has resulted in a number of changes to the risk owners, scores and content of some risks.

The Board were advised that the risk heat map shows the top 17 risks facing the College with three of the top four risks relating to financial matters, with Ofsted and English & Maths completing the top five risks

The Board were advised at of the total 42 risk, the one Business Critical Risk remained the risk relating to capital programmes.

The Board **NOTED** the update on the Risk Register.

## 5.7 Group Risk Management Policy Framework

**Recommended by Group Audit & Risk Committee**

[Reading Room](#) Appendix 1 Policy Framework

The Group Risk Management Policy Framework was presented to the Board by the Group CFO and was recommended by the Group Audit & Risk Committee for Approval.

It was reported that the Group Risk Management Policy Framework sets out the approach of the Group to risk management, its appetite for risk, responsibilities for risk, together with how risks will be scored.

The Board were advised that the Policy is reviewed and approved every two years and there have only been a few minor changes to the policy.

There are no material changes which impact on the College, with the most significant changes relating to the financial elements of the risk scoring matrix for the Trust.

In addition, it was reported that the risk scoring Matrix had been updated to include the LASER Education Foundation, with the financial thresholds being set according to the expected turnover of circa £150k in year one.

The Board **NOTED** the report and updated Policy and **APPROVED** as recommended.

## 5.8 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan

**Recommended by Group Audit & Risk Committee**

The Board received the 23/24 Internal Audit Plan as presented by the Group CFO and recommended by the Group Audit & Risk Committee for APPROVAL.

It was reported that the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for the Group has been developed in consultation with the Chair of the Audit Committee, the Head of Internal Audit, Group Chief Executive Officer and the Group Chief Financial Officer.

The plan was structured in order to provide each legal entity with an overall annual opinion over the key areas of risk and assurance to assist the Board with its work.

The Board were advised that it was a comprehensive plan and covers the main areas of risk to be considered on an annual basis including Key Financial Controls, Student Funding & Learner Numbers, and Cyber Security.

It was reported that the plan also includes a number of other audit areas for review for 2023/24 which include but are not limited to Payroll and Pensions; Management of Capital Projects; Estates Management; Staff Utilisation; Office for Students Compliance, and Safeguarding.

It was reported that the internal audit plan contains provision for 87 internal audit days which is slightly lower than the previous year but with the same number of audits.

The Board **CONSIDERED** and **NOTED** the plan as presented and **APPROVED** the number of days and scope as recommended by the Group Audit & Risk Committee.

## Section 6 Governance & Accountability

GDirGov

### 6. Governance

#### 6.1 Governance Matters

[Reading Room](#): Appendix 1: 2023/24 Standing Orders

Appendix 2: Board Register: Lead Governors

The Board received an update on governance matters relating to Standing Orders and the Board Register as presented by the Group CGO.

It was reported that the **Standing Orders** presented detailed and determined how the business of the Corporation is to be conducted, the governance statement and structure, terms of reference and operating procedures for Group and LSEC Committees, and the standards expected of Governors in performing their duties and role.

The Standing Orders included reference to our Governance Code which reflect the Nolan Principles and requirements of AoC Code of Governance for English Colleges.

It was reported that the AoC Governance Code had been amended following consultation with the sector and will be available in Autumn 2023.

A copy of the Governance Code will be circulated to Governors once published.

It was reported that Terms of Reference for the Group Committees have been slightly revised and reviewed and recommended by each Committees for approval.

The Corporation were reminded that the delegated authority of the Group Committees is constituted through the Collaboration Agreement approved by the Board on 11th May 2023.

The Collaboration Agreement outlines the principle charitable and operating objectives of partnership working with the founding members of LASER Education Foundation (“the Foundation”), London South East Colleges (“the College”) and London South East Academies Trust (“the Trust”), collectively known as the Group Organisations.

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that reference to LASER Education Foundation has not yet been added to the Group Scheme of Delegation, as full details of the Foundation’s operations for 2023/24 are yet to be fully defined and will be approved in 2023/24.

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that a new College Handbook for 2024/25 was being prepared, a first draft to be available in the Autumn 2023.

The Board were reminded that until that time the College must comply with the HM Treasury Managing Public Money and the Dfe Bitesize guidance documents previously circulated.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the Standing Orders,

The Board were presented with the Board Register detailing members of the Corporation and their Committee Membership including the roles of Chairs of Group and LSEC Committees, which required APPROVAL.

The Board reviewed the Register and APPROVED all roles and leads.

The Board were also advised that with Ofsted Inspection due in 2023/24, the following Governors are nominated for Lead Roles during and inspection

David Eastgate Lead for Leadership & Management  
Mark Trinick Lead for Quality of Education  
Angela Hands Lead for Safeguarding  
Kate Shiner Lead for Skills  
Darren Kirwin Lead for Personal Development.

The Board **APPROVED** the Lead Roles as presented.

The Board recognised the contribution of Lucy Butler and Chinyama Okunuga who had resigned from their position as Governors.



## 6.2 Board Assurance Framework

The Board received the Board Assurance Framework as presented by the Group CGO and following review by the Group Audit & Risk Committee.

The Board were reminded of the requirement to produce an annual Board Assurance Framework (BAF), detailing a number of assurance areas and the level of assurances the Board receives across these areas.

The Board were also reminded that the purpose of the Board Assurance Framework is to reinforce strategic focus and provide improved management of risk. Highlighting both areas of strength and weakness or blind spots.

It is a tool the Board can use to hold themselves to account and to provide themselves with assurance that controls are in place and reputational risk is being managed effectively.

The Group Audit & Risk Committee have defined and endorsed that the BAF comprise and focus on five key assurance areas.

1. Governance
2. Strategic Operations
3. Risk Management
4. Audit
5. Performance (Financial, Academic, Estates, IT and People)

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that assurance levels across the assurance areas remain similar and almost wholly the same previous year reporting.

The Board were advised that there had been some changes to the assurance areas to include additional items for example to recognise the new information and work completed on Curriculum Strategy and the new requirement for an Accountability Agreement in current year.

In addition, the Board were advised that Executive and Senior Management Teams consider the assurance aspects of each risk on the Risk Register with the Group Chief Finance Officer during the risk register assessment and evaluation process.

The Board were reminded that it was agreed that the BAF Assurance Tool will become an annual feature for the Group Audit & Risk Committee and will be reviewed by the Board annually too.

It was reported that the Group Chief Governance Officer will continue to update the Board Assurance Framework to reflect risk assessments as appropriate, combined with activity presented through Board and Committee Reports.

The Board **NOTED** the update as presented.

### **6.3 2022/23 Annual Complaints Report by Profile**

#### **6.4**

The Board received the 2022/23 Annual Complaints Report as provided by the Group CGO.

The report provided an overview of the complaints for the academic year 2022/23 by student profile.

It was reported that 61% of complaints received were in relation to Bromley campus which is the largest in terms of student and staff population.

It was reported that as of the 30 June 2023, there had been 145 complaints for this academic year a mixture of formal and informal complaints. Comparison with previous year is not possible due to changes in the process but it is believed that formal complaints are on par with previous years.

The report considered the profile and ethnicity of the complainant and key differences.

It was reported that monthly volumes of complaints had fluctuated throughout the year with the lowest number of complaints in December and the highest number in January.

Overall, 53% of complainants were male and 42% female and 5% unknown gender.

Students aged 20 and over represent approximately 37% of complainants with 49% of complaints received from 19 and under; 14% are unknown age wise.

It was reported that 51% of complainants are White and 34% from ethnic backgrounds with 14% unknown; the split in our learner population shows that ethnic minorities make up 40% and White 60% and is therefore representative of the overall student profile.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

### **6.5 Policies Updated**

[Reading Room: Whistleblowing Policy](#)

[Reading Room: Group Governance Policies](#)

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that all policies presented had been reviewed by Group Chief Governance Officer and refreshed with no substantial or significant changes or context meaning.

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that the Whistleblowing policy is a statutory policy that will be published on the College Website. It was reported that the policy had minor adjustments to job titles applied and no change to policy context.

The Board were asked to **NOTE** that Governance policies are a mark of good governance practice and useful for new Governors and Trustees to familiarise themselves with process and procedures. It was reported that all Governance policies have been updated to include LASER Education Foundation and job title changes; no context changes have been applied.

The Board are asked to **NOTE** that all policies have been updated to reflect new job titles and refreshed as per our policy matrix review period.

The Board **APPROVED** the updated policies as presented.

**7. AOB:**

It was reported that the seal had been administered during the period May to July to endorse a GLA Funding Grant and Land Transfer Deeds.

**8. Next meeting date Wednesday 18 October 2023**

**Reading Room Items**

**Item 3.1: Group CEO Report**

Appendix 1 External Policy Update  
Appendix 2: AOC Summary Update  
Appendix 3 Letter to Robert Halfon  
Appendix 4 AoC Manifesto Opportunity England

**Item 3.2: Local Skills Improvement Fund Application**

Appendix 1 & 2 – Application Form

**Item 4.1 Executive Principal & CLO Report**

Appendix 1: TLA Policy  
Appendix 2: Learning Philosophy

**Item 4.2 Curriculum Planning & Skills**

Appendix 1 Accountability Agreement  
Appendix 2 Curriculum Strategy

**Item 4.6 Safeguarding**

Appendix 1 ces023/24 Safeguarding Policy

**Item 4.8 EDI Update**

Appendix 2&3 Profiles  
Appendix4 EDI Calendar

**Item 5.1 Financial Update**

Appendix 1-4

**Item 5.3 2023/24 Budget**

Appendices 2-6

**Item 5.4 Three-year Financial Plan**

Appendices 2-6

**Item 5.5: Financial Regulations Update**

Appendix 1: Finance Regulations

**Item 5.6: Risk Register**

Appendix 3 – High Risks Individual Entries  
Appendix 4 - Risk Scoring Matrix

**Item 5.7 Group Risk Management Framework**

Appendix 1 Policy Framework

**Item 6.1 Governance Matters**

Appendix 1 Standing Orders

**Item 6.4 Policy Updates**

Appendix 1 Whistleblowing Policy  
Appendices 2-8 Group Governance Policies

Minutes APPROVED :

*Louise Nadal*

Lousie Nadal, Vice Chair  
18 October 2023