

CORPORATION

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 19 March 2023 at 4.00pm

Present physically:	K Chapman N Savvas, CEO	S Daley, Vice Chair (part)
Present virtually:	A Duffety C Chua (part) C Higgins, Vice Chair	E D'Souza, Chair J Gazzard (part) S Howard (part)
In Attendance:	A McGarel, CFO C Shaw, Group Sixth Form Principal R Cannon, Committee Member R Hetherington, Committee Member R Lawson, presenting item 3 S Gales, Governance Professional	
Apologies:	H Colthorpe, Staff Governor J Wakelam	
Absent:	S Shaddock, FE Student Governor	

1 **Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence**

C Higgins, E D'Souza, N Savvas and S Daley declared their roles as Trustees of Suffolk Academies Trust. No other conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared.

Apologies were received from H Colthorpe, and J Wakelam, and the absence of S Shaddock was noted.

The Chair welcomed Rob Lawson who is presenting the outcomes of the External Governance Review (item 3) and Committee members: R Cannon and R Hetherington.

J Gazzard joined the meeting at 4.06pm

The Chair provided a verbal update on the Ofsted inspection which took place at ASFC this week.

2 **Duty to Review and Accountability Agreement**

Governors received and considered the papers provided which were recommended by the Duty to Review working group.

C Shaw summarised the process taken to draft the Board Curriculum Review.

S Howard joined the meeting at 4.14pm

Governors commended the approach taken for the Board Curriculum Review and the quality of the report, and noted that the report created is now considered an exemplar by the DfE.

Governors noted that the document evidences our established practice rather than adding anything new, and queried whether we could work with the DfE to change the policy to make it better flow within colleges' business cycle. C Shaw advised that we are feeding back to the DfE on this.

C Chua joined the meeting at 4.16pm

Action

Governors noted there could be inadvertent gaps created by this process as the LSIPs are county specific and the accountability agreements are centred around the providers reach / geography, and queried how we can effectively measure the impact at region level. The Chair fed back from AoC discussions and C Shaw fed back from discussions with policy makers.

The Vice Chair attended the New Anglia Colleges Group LSIP meeting, which was attended by governance members from across the region, and noted that WSC was significantly further ahead with the development of these documents than other local providers.

The Corporation **approved** the Board Curriculum Review document, subject to the amendment to include the reference for the maps used.

C Shaw summarised the process taken to draft the Annual Accountability Statement.

Governors commended the inclusion of Aim 2 which focusses on the development of 'soft skills for students and apprentices', as this reflects our strategy and best serves our students to develop life skills which will enrich their career.

The Corporation **approved** the Annual Accountability Statement, subject to the amendment to include the reference for the maps used, and **delegated authority to the Chair** to sign the documents **and to the Governance Professional** to submit the Accountability Agreement by 31 May 2023.

Governors commended C Shaw and his team for leading the Duty to Review process.

3 **External Governance Review**

Governors received and considered the papers provided.

The Chair summarised the process taken to arrange and complete the External Governance Review.

R Lawson summarised the findings of the reports three strands: Board composition, Board structure, and Board interaction, and the rationale for the overall conclusion on Board effectiveness that: ***There is strong evidence that the Board is highly proficient and consistently impacts positively on college strategy, effectiveness, and outcomes.***

R Lawson summarised the next stage of the process and how the External Governance Review is used.

S Daley left the meeting at 4.09pm

Governors thanked R Lawson for the comprehensive report.

R Lawson and Governors discussed the reference (on page 13) about Governors understanding the College's strategic priorities and fed back how helpful the Strategic Conference meetings have been in developing this.

Governors fed back that they find the multiple opportunities to experience the College first-hand hugely rewarding.

Governors fed back that the offer of hybrid meetings are very supportive and improves attendance and engagement, as well as helping to reduce the carbon footprint of the Board.

Governors asked R Lawson to share examples of strong Student Governor engagement in the sector. R Lawson summarised examples where he has seen this. Governors noted the role of Student Governor is less appealing than Student Council member, and queried whether R Lawson is aware of any change of policy re Student Governors. R Lawson answered this.

Governors noted the inefficiency caused by the artificial governance barrier between WSC and SAT, and the CFO provided a verbal update on the Pathfinder group's progress.

Governors discussed the recommendations and **agreed to delegate authority to the Governance Professional** to draft the corresponding action plan. Governors **agreed to delegate authority to the Nominations and Governance Committee*** to review and recommend the action plan to the Corporation at its meeting in July.

**Note:* The Chair invited governance members to attend the next meeting of the Nominations and Governance Committee for this item, to contribute to the discussion and development of the action plan.

4 Any Other Business

None.

The meeting closed at 5.28pm