

## RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 1 March 2023 at 4.30pm

**Present physically:** A Duffety, Vice Chair (part) N Savvas, CEO  
E D'Souza R Hetherington

**Present virtually:** C Higgins, Chair K Chapman

**In attendance:** A McGarel, CFO  
A Swift, Group Director Estates  
A Wheeler, Executive Director Curriculum Initiatives  
C Willcocks, Group Director IT  
G Grainger, Chief Information Officer  
R Lawson, observing as part of WSC's external governance review (part)  
R Stevenson, Group Operations Director  
S Hart, WSC Health and Safety Manager  
S Gales, Governance Professional  
S Graham, Chief People Officer

**Apologies:** None

**Absent:** None

### Action

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

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

No apologies for absence. The Committee welcomed R Hetherington as a newly appointed Committee member and R Lawson who is observing the meeting as part of the external governance review.

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

3. **Matters Arising from the meeting held on 23 November 2022**

Most matters arising from the previous meeting were discussed later in the agenda or were ongoing to be reported at the next meeting.

Governors noted there were more ongoing items than usual and queried if the Executive had sufficient capacity to complete the items. The Executive noted the actions are ongoing due to the complexity of some of the projects.

4. **Risk Register Extract**

Governors received an extract of the updated Risk Register.

The Chair noted the progress to improve our cyber security and C Willcocks noted that the risk of cyber security will be a long-term risk, but advised that now we have gained Cyber Essentials plus we expect the risk to be mitigated to amber.

Governors noted the recent cyber security news about TikTok and queried whether this posed a particular risk to the College. C Willcocks noted that our security settings prohibit downloads of TikTok to College-owned devices. Feedback from his networks that the education sector has been heavily targeted by hackers, with a significant impact on those targeted, and so the College will always need to try to stay one step ahead. Governors were satisfied that everything reasonable is being done to ensure cyber security, but C. Willcocks was asked to flag up if there ever became a significantly increased risk which would require additional funding.

Governors noted the updates compared to the extract reviewed at the last meeting of the Committee and queried if the executive were comfortable that WSCR031 is now mitigated to a green risk. The CEO answered said they were, given the strong executive team and structure now in place.

Governors reviewed the risks and changes to the register and **felt assured** that the mitigations proposed are appropriate.

## 5. **Executive Board summary report**

### i. **Health and Safety**

Governors received and noted the overview report provided which summarised the discussions from the Health and Safety Board. The clarity and completeness of the report was commended.

#### a) **Health and Safety termly report (autumn term)**

Governors received and considered the detailed report and S Hart summarized the key points.

Governors discussed the reporting of accidents and incidents and noted the reporting needs to disaggregate health and safety accidents and incidents from student welfare referrals (which may be first logged by health and safety staff) to ensure we can identify trends, themes and allocate support resources appropriately. S Hart confirmed this work in progress.

Governors asked whether we benchmark accidents and incidents against other comparable providers to identify trends. R Stevenson noted we triangulate the data internally (against previous years, other departments, etc.), against SAT data and within the education sector via AoC data where available (although external data are limited).

Governors discussed support for Lone Working and queried if the use of the App could be extended to support US students who are studying onsite beyond college working hours. S Hart to investigate the cost and GDPR implications of this, and if prohibitive seek other ways of allowing out-of-hours study for those who do not have facilities to work at home.

S Hart

### R Lawson left the meeting at 4.55pm

Governors noted the update on our Community and Business Centres and queried the risk of our newest centre – NCTC. S Hart summarised the outcome of his recent health and safety inspection visit.

Governors commended the progress made on several fronts and asked S Hart to convey the Committee's thanks to the H&S team.

S Hart

### ii. **Sustainability**

Governors received and considered the overview report provided which summarised the discussions from the Sustainability Board; and the detailed update reports provided.

Governors noted the current funding for the Green Skills project ends on 31 March 2023 and queried whether, to continue this work, additional funding will be needed and how this would be funded. A Wheeler answered this and agreed to provide a detailed funding update at the next meeting.

A Wheeler

### A Duffety joined the meeting at 5.05pm

Governors queried how we evaluate the impact of the Green Skills project. A Wheeler answered this.

<p>Governors noted the feedback from Steve Frampton that we could apply for an AoC Beacon Award in recognition of our sustainability work, and queried if we will be applying for this. A Wheeler confirmed we will be.</p>	
<p>Governors noted BASVIC are leading on sustainability in the sector and suggested we share best practice with them.</p>	A Wheeler
<p>Governors noted the future demand for skills linked to sustainability (e.g. to install and maintain heat pump and electric vehicle technology etc.) and asked if we can capture progression data into these sectors to measure our impact. A Wheeler noted that we have established skills delivery in these sectors and continue to support delivery of key skills linked to the LSIPs, but advised it is difficult to track student progress into specific sub-sectors.</p>	
<p>Governors asked if they can also undertake carbon literacy training. A Wheeler agreed to share the training.</p>	A Wheeler
<p>Governors noted the funding for certain sustainability projects run out by the end of the year. It should be a priority to seek external funding, but also begin to incorporate sustainability as part of mainstream planning across the ECG.</p>	A Wheeler R Stevenson
<p><b>iii. Infrastructure</b></p>	
<p>Governors received and noted the overview report provided which summarised the discussions from the Infrastructure Board.</p>	
<p><b>6. People Update</b></p>	
<p><b>i. KPI Report</b></p>	
<p>Governors received and considered the paper provided and S Graham summarised the key points.</p>	
<p>K Chapman, as Governor Lead for People, commended the progress made and asked S Graham to convey the Committee's thanks to the HR team for their hard work.</p>	S Graham
<p>Governors discussed the cost-of-living crisis and the impact this is having on staff retention/turnover/recruitment and pay expectations, and queried how we can support staff. S Graham outlined how we are supporting staff including uplifting the lowest pay scales above the minimum wage, offering wellbeing support and nurturing cultural events. Governors noted that the increasing focus of staff wellbeing is going a long way to mitigating the potential impact of recruitment/retention affecting the sector.</p>	
<p>Governors noted the EDI report though queried the metrics used for ethnicity and religion. as they appeared to double-count certain categories. S Graham advised these are national metrics used and agreed to provide the definitions for each metric.</p>	S Graham
<p><b>ii. Update Report</b></p>	
<p>Governors received and considered the paper provided and S Graham summarised the key points. and S Graham summarised the key points.</p>	
<p><b>iii. Gender Pay Gap</b></p>	
<p>Governors received and considered the paper provided.</p>	
<p>Governors recognised that the median figure in the Gender Pay Gap is a reflection of the staffing profile where a high percentage of the staffing is female, and the predominant occupation of the lower paid support roles are also by female staff. However, it is important to note that, despite the headline figures, pay for equivalent roles is equivalent. S Graham noted that the College maintains fair and open recruitment and selection processes that do not favour any candidate group.</p>	
<p>Governors queried if we should implement positive action programmes to proactively seek to balance gender pay. The Committee discussed the interpretations of the gender pay gap and whether positive discriminatory practices should be introduced. The CEO</p>	S Graham

proposed, and the Committee agreed, that S Graham should undertake further analysis to understand the root causes of the gender pay gap and to propose any appropriate actions which might close the gender pay gap.

**7. Physical Infrastructure Update**

Governors received and considered the paper provided and A Swift summarised the key points.

Governors commended the rapid installation of photovoltaic cells across the College (and now being extended to SAT) and asked for this to be quantified to show the approximate impact of this e.g. yield and utilisation compared to the cost if this was supplied by the national grid. A Swift and A McGarel to provide this.

A Swift  
A McGarel

Governors noted the building condition report and asked that, once received, this report be rated to identify the urgent priorities and the medium/long term priorities for incorporation into the long-term capital plan.

A Swift

Governors queried the next phase of decarbonising our estate. R Stevenson answered this and that this was now part of our ongoing capital planning. The sustainability group are developing a long-term plan to become carbon neutral.

**8. Virtual Infrastructure Update**

Governors received and considered the paper provided and C Willcocks summarised the key points.

Governors commended the progress made on all fronts and asked C Willcocks to convey the Committee's thanks to the IT team.

C Willcocks

Governors noted previous system outages and queried the end-user feedback to triangulate if the service is now reliable and systems are more robust. C Willcocks answered this – a survey is being prepared.

**9. Data, Systems and Processes Update**

Governors received and considered the paper provided and G Grainger summarised the key points.

Governors noted these are sizeable projects and will be continuing over the medium-term but asked future reports to show milestones so progress against them can be monitored. Governors were pleased that prioritisation should give some short term wins.

G Grainger

Governors queried how technologically literate our staff are. G Grainger noted that technical staff are in demand and difficult to recruit, For other staff technological literacy is variable but there are plans in place to support smarter working.

**10. Any Other Business**

• **Committee papers**

Governors thanked the Executive for the high-quality reports provided, though noted there is some duplication of the content of the reports and some confusion caused by the combining data across the ECG. R Stevenson and S Gales to discuss and decide where papers could be streamlined.

R Stevenson  
S Gales

The meeting closed at 6.07pm