

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 6 June 2018 at 6.00pm**  
**In Room 6SW1 at Paddington Green Campus**

**Present**

Tony Johnston (Chair)  
Alex Fyfe  
Keith Cowell, (CEO)  
Simon Haben

**Also in Attendance**

Anna Openshaw-Lawrence, Group Executive Director of HR  
Amanda Thorneycroft, Chief Operating Officer  
Eamon McCarroll, Group Executive Director of Finance  
Ita Leavy, Head of Learner Services (Item 7)  
Adrian Quester, Head of Marketing & Strategic Communications (Item 10)

Natalie Watt, Interim Clerk to the Corporation (Minutes)

\*The items were taken in the order of the minutes below.

1. **Attendance and Apologies for Absence** **Action**

Peter Child

The meeting was quorate throughout.
2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest other than those in the Register of Interests.
3. **Health and Safety Announcements**

Standard arrangements.
4. **Chair's Announcements**
  - The Chair informed the Committee that in order to accommodate those presenting individual reports the order of the agenda would be altered.
  - Governors were also informed that due to the timing of the meetings a further meeting of FGP would be confirmed at the end of the meeting to focus on reviewing the draft budget. Agreed.
5. **Minutes of the following:**
  - a) **Meeting held on 29 November 2017** – The minutes of the meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair.
  - b) **Meeting held on 7 March 2018** – The minutes of the meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair.
6. **Matters arising**

All matters addressed on the agenda.
7. **Financial Support for Learners Policy (Item 8)**

Presented by the Head of Learner Services.

  - The Committee were informed that the two policies presented were UCG policies and applicable to both colleges.

- Discussion followed on the discretionary bursaries for free meals, the criteria for the discretionary bursary fund and the application and assessment process at P4.
- Governors questioned the level of publicity attached to the bursary scheme and were assured that it was widely advertised to students across the colleges.
- They were advised that leaflets were circulated at enrolment, information was on the website and it was flagged up at parent's evenings and via word of mouth between students.
- Discussion followed on the attendance criteria and Governors endorsed the consistent approach, being adopted, across the Group for the new academic year.
- Governors acknowledged that the attendance targets for CNWL were stretch targets.
- The Committee discussed the need to keep engagement levels high and the comparative attendance levels at CNWL and CWC, in relation to the different cohorts of students.
- The Head of Learner Services summarised the previous system in use at CNWL and it was noted, that as reported previously, this was being replaced. Discussion followed on the financial packages available to students as detailed in the report.
- Governors noted the changes and emphasised the need for the process to be effectively managed, to ensure that there was timely and appropriate support for students.
- Governors queried the level of harmonisation across the Group. They were assured that this was a supportive step towards standardising support for Learners. It was anticipated that by reverting to a paper based system at CNWL this would support the standardisation and control levels, to ensure a more robust system.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the policies presented.

## 8. Marketing Strategy (Item 10)

- The CEO confirmed that strategic priorities were being brought to each Committee as appropriate that once approved at Corporation these would be embedded into the marketing strategy.
- Governors sought confirmation that the strategy and activities were compliant with GDPR. This was confirmed. Governor's attention was drawn to point 2.3 and the acknowledgement of the need to focus on improving the reputational impact of UCG.
- Detailed discussion followed on the use of the website and social media. Governors were informed that there was significant work needed on the CNWL website to bring it up to date and match the functionality of the CWC site. Noted.
- Governors discussed the strategic context summarised in the report at section 3 and the challenges of maintaining a good position on google search engines, noting, the daily cap on searches and the costs associated with this.
- It was further noted that other London colleges were also accessing this option more and more and the financial costs were increasing.
- Governors emphasised the need for apprenticeships to be a focus of efforts and it was noted that competition in London for this area of provision was high.
- The Chair of the Corporation informed the Committee that he had tested the website at CNWL and fed back on the issues that he encountered. The Committee were assured that an action plan of work was in place to strengthen both sites over the coming weeks.
- The Committee were also advised that the Marketing Team across the Group were focussed on delivering successful open days.
- Governors emphasised the need for overarching processes and challenged the Executive Team on the length of time it was taking to address the website

CEO

issues at CNWL. The Committee were assured that the team were focussed on an action plan to address this, it was also anticipated that an online application process for CNWL would be live shortly.

- Governors emphasised the need for the Senior Team to deliver the key priorities identified, particularly in light of the poor performance the previous year.
- The CEO acknowledged Governors concerns but also the challenges facing the Senior Team. Discussion followed on the segmentation issues at CNWL and the underpinning challenges of linking business processes and marketing.
- The Chair acknowledged the challenges facing the Senior Team, however, he stated that the competition in the sector did not allow for any delays in delivery.
- It was agreed that content and methodology of the website were key and discussion followed on the sales strategies in place for courses.
- Governors discussed the need for UCG to hold tangible events to reinforce marketing messages.
- Governors also expressed a desire to have clear information and deliverable actions to ensure that revenue expectations were managed and reflected in a realistic budget.
- Governors discussed the need to ensure that as part of the process engagement with stakeholders was maintained. The CEO summarised the work and meetings that he had undertaken recently and Governors were assured that the Group was fully engaged.
- It was noted that previous concerns around GDPR had now been allayed and there were no issues flagged up in relation in this requirement.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the marketing report for information.

9. **CNWL Curriculum Review (Item 14)**  
**Subject to Part Two Minutes.**

10. **Draft Budget (Item 7)**  
**Subject to Part Two Minutes**

11. **Grievance Policy (Item 9)**

- The Committee were informed that both Colleges policies had been considered and reviewed and the best of both had been extracted and checked against legal requirements. This combined policy was now presented for approval.
- Governors queried what policies existed for SPH post-merger? The Executive Director of HR advised the Committee that this was the responsibility of the Clerk. The Interim Clerk confirmed that as the continuing body the SPH policies adopted by CWC pre-merger would be applicable.
- It was agreed that the CEO would meet and discuss this further with the Clerk and an update provided to the next Remuneration Committee.

**Exec.**  
**Dir. HR**

The Committee **APPROVED** the Grievance Policy for recommendation to the Corporation

12& **Strategic Plan Objectives & College Key performance Indicators (Item 11 & 12)**

- 13
- The CEO reminded Governors that they approved the strategic aims of UCG in January 2018 this year. Following on from this a series of strategic aims and objectives were being proposed to each of the Committees within their areas of responsibility.
  - Once feedback had been provided a final Strategic Plan would be brought together and presented to the Corporation on 4 July for approval. It was anticipated that the final document would published for the start of the next academic year.
  - Governor's attention was drawn to 3.2 and the objectives outlined. Governors queried the length of time the strategic plan was aimed at, the CEO confirmed

it was a 3-5-year plan that would be reviewed annually to ensure it remained fit for purpose.

- Governors proposed that the wording at 3.1 be changed from 'outstanding' to 'effective' acknowledging the need to ensure that it was not just viewed through a property strategy prism. CEO
- Under strategic aim 4 discussion took place on whether the third bullet point should also refer to the financial position of the College with greater emphasis on the need to grow and not just explore other sources of income. It was agreed that the CEO would amend this as needed. CEO
- The CEO informed the Committee that the Teaching, Learning and Skills Committee had been provided with other objectives and the combined plan would encompass all aspects of the organisation. Noted.
- Governors identified the need to include reference to growing stakeholder engagement and gaining the ability to influence the local college communities. CEO

The Committee **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the report.

**14. Performance Against Enrolment & Funding Targets (Item 13)**

- The CEO presented the report. Governors requested that 3.1 be changed to reflect that the property strategy would be for UCG not just CNWL. Agreed. CEO
- Discussion followed on whether or not greater reflection should be given on the importance of equality and diversity. It was agreed that this would be left to the discretion of the CEO.
- Governors discussed the achievement gap and queried the 5% identified in section 3.2. It was agreed that the CEO would raise this with the TLS Committee. CEO
- Governors noted the proposed payroll as a % of total income would be equal to or less than 57%, discussion followed on the sector norm for this KPI and where the two colleges currently were in relation to it. It was agreed that the CEO would give further consideration to this KPI and confirm it at Corporation. CEO
- Governors discussed whether or not non-breach of bank covenants should be included but it was agreed that this was expected to be an exceptional circumstance and therefore not appropriate for inclusion.
- Governors sought clarification of the percentage of those recommending the College and requested that when reporting against this the context of the total responses be provided. CEO
- Discussion followed on the appraisal target and Governors debated about whether this should be 100%. The CEO advised the Committee that the two Colleges were at different stages in terms of developing systematic responses to this. It was agreed that the percentage would be increased but not to 100%. CEO to advise the Board when the final version was presented. CEO
- Governors requested that the staff utilisation be clarified as to whether this was teaching staff or all staff. The CEO confirmed that it was teaching staff and that this would be clarified in the final version. CEO
- Governors noted the 90% target for employer survey responses. Following discussion 95% was agreed as a stretch target.
- Discussion also followed on apprenticeship growth and the minimum of £800k ECR income and the need for an overarching group apprenticeship strategy. CEO
- Governors requested that in future this financial amount be reflected as a percentage to allow Governors to understand the context within which it was set. Agreed. CEO

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** the KPI report and to **RECOMMEND** it to the Corporation for approval subject to the above changes. CEO

**15. Financial Report (April)**

## CONFIRMED MINUTES

- Governors received the update and report from the Principal of CWC. It was noted that EFA recruitment currently stands at 4057, 20 above the overall allocation of 4037 and that the campus was on target.
- Governors also noted the update on adult allocation for CWC. Discussion followed on the advanced 24+ loans and the challenges around this at CWC and in the wider sector.
- Governors noted the difference in achievement for HE enrolments between CNWL and CWC.
- Discussion followed on the underachievement. It was noted that EFA recruitment currently stands at 4057, 20 above the overall allocation of 4037 and that the campus was on target.
- Governors also noted the update on adult allocation for CWC. Discussion followed on the advanced 24+ loans and the challenges around this at CWC and in the wider sector.
- Governors noted the difference in achievement for HE enrolments between CNWL and CWC.
- Discussion followed on the underachievement. Governors were informed that the College had undertaken a robust data cleansing exercise and were confident in what was presented.
- The Committee were advised that as a result of the exercise staff were more confident and effective in their management of data.
- Governors noted however that this lower than expected numbers would also be another impacting figure on the year end position.
- Governors discussed and acknowledged the challenges around the reforecasting of the year end position.
- The CEO informed the Committee that the new curriculum plan currently being finalised was a timely focussed. Governors discussed the impact and need for robust MIS systems.
- It was noted that MIS would be used as the basis for the monitoring KPI's. Governors were informed that senior staff were aware that there was a 4-weekly cycle of reporting.
- Discussion took place on the need for electronic registration. Governors also debated the future utilisation of space and the delivery of education in a flexible physical environment that was sustainable.
- Governors discussed the introduction of pro monitor and its potential impact and integration with MIS to support a more robust reporting structure. Discussion followed on the impact of poor data particularly arising out of the merger from CNWL and the subsequent significant risk to the delivery of the budget.
- The Committee discussed the potential impact on the financial health status of UCG and the resulting implications for funding bid. Governors noted that this would also result in some form of special financial monitoring measures from the funding bodies.
- The Chief Operating Officer informed the Committee that the College had been placed back into business support following the latest forecast and potential breach of covenants.
- Governors discussed what this meant for the Group and the potential use of the loan facility.
- The Chair informed the Committee that the Strategy and Estates Committee would be considering the revised proposals in due course at its next meeting.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the report.

### 16. **Health and Safety Report (H&S)**

- The Report was presented by the Chief Operating Officer. The Committee were informed that from September 2018, there would be one overarching H&S

Committee for this area of responsibility. The FGP Committee welcomed the news of an integrated reporting system between the two colleges

- Governors sought assurance that the lock-down procedures had been confirmed and widely communicated, noting that some issues existed with this previously.
- The COO confirmed that this had now been addressed.
- Governors discussed the reporting of incidents and noted the decrease. Governors acknowledged the additional work undertaken by the Enrichment Team and the strong liaison with external agencies and on-site security staff.
- The COO confirmed that there were no new significant matters to bring to Governors attention.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the report for information and monitoring.

**17. Human Resources Report**

- The report was presented by the Executive Group Director of HR. The Committee were advised of the outcome of the recent Employment Tribunal case.
- The Governors expressed their appreciation to all the staff involved in the case for their hard work to bring this matter to a resolution.
- The Group Executive Director of HR confirmed to Governors that there were no new significant issues to report. Noted.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the report for information and monitoring.

**18. Estates Report**

- The report was presented by the Chief Operating Officer. The Committee were updated on general estates matters and informed of the restructuring of the estates team at CNWL, through natural wastage.
- Governors noted that the reducing footprint at Willesden could potentially reduce future estates costs.
- Governors were informed that the Maida Vale site, whilst being fully operational, was still the subject to further discussions with Lakehouse.
- Governors were reminded that the matter went to adjudication the previous year.
- The Committee were advised that the second half of the project was experiencing similar issues and that dependent on the timing of the financial resolutions, the Group may need to set up a contingent liability. Noted.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the report for information and monitoring.

**19. Property Strategy Update  
Subject to Part Two minutes.**

**20. Operational Continuity Plan**

The Chief Operating Officer informed the Committee that this area was still a work in progress. It was agreed that this item would be carried forward to the following meeting. Agreed.

**Clerk**

**Items C/Fwd.**

**21. Restructure  
Subject to Part Two minutes.**

**22. Confidential Item  
Subject to Part Two Minutes.**

**23. Any Other Urgent Business  
None**

**24. Date of Next Meeting**

CONFIRMED MINUTES

- It was agreed that a **virtual ZOOM meeting** would be set up on **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 3pm**, for the Committee to focus on the draft to ensure that it was subject to robust scrutiny before submission to the Corporation.
- Annual schedule for 2018/19 to be circulated ASAP.

**25. Issues of Confidentiality**

As noted above.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_