



accurate record and approved, subject to those changes.

**3.2. Governors made the following comments on the confidential minutes of the meeting of 8 June 2022.**

**3.2.1. In paragraph 16.1.17 Mark Dawson was referred to as the Audit Manager, this should be Audit Director.**

**3.2.2. The Confidential Minutes of the meeting on 8 June 2022 were agreed as an accurate record and approved.**

**3.3. Governors made the following comments on the Action Record**

**3.3.1. Governors asked whether action 12.2.4 of 22 March 2022 was on track.** The Director of Governance and Policy confirmed that it was.

**3.3.2. The Chair noted that the Risk Register was not on the agenda but would be reviewed in-depth at the next meeting.**

**3.3.3. Governors noted the Action Record.**

**4. FREMENS PARK NURSERY OFSTED REPORT**

**4.1. The Director of Student Services joined the meeting to introduce the Freeman's Park Nursery Ofsted report. The following points were highlighted.**

**4.1.1. The Director of Student Services had been delighted that the nursery had been rated as 'good.'**

**4.1.2. The EYFS framework had only been in place for a year and had been challenging for staff. Staff had done an amazing job of understanding the new framework.**

**4.1.3. Ofsted had made two recommendations on hygiene and the teaching of online dangers. Immediate action had been taken on these observations.**

**4.2. Governors made the following comments.**

**4.2.1. The nursery had previously been rated as 'outstanding.' What would it take to get back to 'outstanding'?** There would need to be no recommendations to achieve an outstanding assessment. The College was in contact with several independent providers and was not aware of any receiving an 'outstanding' rating.

**4.2.2. Governors noted that the new framework was 'tough' and that the Freeman's Park Nursery had received a good report. It was also good to see that Ofsted's recommendations had been swiftly implemented.** The Deputy Principal added that the lessons learnt from this inspection would be used by the Abbey Park Nursery.

**4.2.3. Governors extended their thanks to the Freeman's Park Nursery team.**

**4.3. Governors noted the Freeman's Park Nursery Ofsted report.**

**5. HE EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORTS 2021/22**

**5.1. The Head of Higher Education (HE) joined the meeting and presented the HE External Examiner (EE) Reports. The following points were highlighted.**

- 5.1.1. All HE courses had an appointed EE and a report was written at a subject level. EE reports had confirmed that academic standards were upheld and that processes were in place to maintain those standards.
- 5.1.2. The EE reports confirmed that teaching and course content had been commendable.
- 5.1.3. Areas which had been highlighted for improvement would be translated into action by HE programme leaders and covered in their self-evaluation documents throughout the year. This would produce a tangible record of actions based on the areas identified by the EE reports.
- 5.1.4. HE had entered a new phase, largely driven by the need to engage with the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). A TEF submission had to be submitted by January 2023.

## **5.2. Governors asked the following questions.**

- 5.2.1. The EE reports had included recommendations around investment. Could these recommendations be realised?** There was investment as part of the College's capital investment programme and there was also the ability to draw upon external capital funding by applying to the Office for Students.
- 5.2.2. Were these inspections?** No; the EE reports were an annual process which would feed into course level improvements.
- 5.2.3. How did the College compare with other institutions, and what would these reports mean for a future TEF score?** EE reports were confidential and, as such, it was not possible to see reports written for other institutions. The College was in a good position with regards to the TEF and the outcome of the EE report would contribute to this.
- 5.2.4. What were the staffing challenges?** There were pinch points around business and engineering. HE staff also taught FE courses and, without appropriate resourcing, this could be very challenging. HE programme managers were managing this well, but it remained a risk.
- 5.2.5. Would there be a student submission for the TEF?** Student submissions were not compulsory, but work would be undertaken to motivate a representative sample of students to write submissions. There were issues around the volume of HE students and the fact that many were off campus but the HE team was working with Student Services to provide support for students writing submissions.
- 5.2.6. How would year-on-year comparisons would be made between EE reports?** The Head of HE offered to take this away for his team to look at how progression over time could be monitored.

## **5.3. Governors noted the HE External Examiner reports.**

## **6. EXAMINING BODY INSPECTIONS**

- 6.1. The Deputy Principal introduced the report from the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ) inspection. The following points were highlighted.
  - 6.1.1. The JCQ catered for eight large qualification providers and inspectors were able to turn up unannounced to exams to ensure compliance. The observed exams had been GCSE Psychology and BTEC Level 3 Health and Social Care.

6.1.2. These exams had been found to be compliant against the twenty-four criteria assessed. One recommendation had been made around contingency planning and this was subsequently added to the MIS Contingency Plan.

**6.2. Governors asked what had previously been done about contingency planning.** Other staff had been deployed and consideration had been given to shutting classes during some exams.

**6.3. Governors noted the JCQ Inspection report.**

**6.4.** The Deputy Principal introduced the paper outlining the unannounced NCFE inspection. There were no recommendations.

**6.5. Governors noted the work of Examinations Coordinator, Chris Savage and asked for their thanks to be extended to him and his team.**

**6.6. Governors noted the NCFE Inspection report.**

## **7. FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY CONSULTATION AND DUTY TO REVIEW PROVISION UPDATE**

**7.1.** The Director of Governance and Policy provided an update. The following points were highlighted.

7.1.1. The Skills for Jobs second consultation was as expected. There were key proposals around a new single skills fund, expected to be introduced in 2023/24. This would be separate from 16-19 funding. There had also been a proposal for a multi-year approach and a proposal around the calculation of adult skills allocation.

7.1.2. Regarding the statutory duty to review provision, the board had carried out much of this work by creating a Strategic Plan.

7.1.3. In future, instead of a lengthy funding agreement there may be an accountability agreement which the Board would need to be aware of.

7.1.4. The Deputy Principal added that there had been concern about basing the first five-year allocation on the post-Covid period. However, the move to a lagged funding system and multi-year delivery was positive.

7.1.5. The External Auditor noted a reference to reducing the audit burden although there was no detail on this.

**7.2. Governors made the following comments.**

**7.2.1. The Chair asked for an update at the November 2022 meeting.** This would be provided if there was more detail although the DfE sometimes took a while to respond once consultations closed.

**7.2.2. How had the College responded to the consultation?** Feedback had been given through the Association of Colleges (AoC) networks; the AoC would be putting together a detailed response.

**7.3. Governors noted the update.**

**7.4. Governors then raised the issue of the recent unrest in Leicester and asked whether this was having an impact on the College.** The Deputy

Principal offered an update.

- 7.4.1. This had been a concern to SLT and the unrest had started to spread to other areas.
- 7.4.2. Campus Wardens and staff had been asked to be more vigilant, and the SET team and Student Union had been asked to highlight any concerns. The Director of Student Services had also been asked to monitor the situation.
- 7.4.3. There were no incidents at the College as most of the unrest had taken place in the evenings. SLT would be making decisions in the interest of safety.

#### **7.5. Governors asked the following questions.**

- 7.5.1. **There had been false allegations made on social media. Would there be any work to help students with critical thinking skills online?** The College was getting out the message that students should not believe everything they saw online, particularly as there had social media commentary by the far-right.
- 7.5.2. **Had the unrest had any impact on attendance?** The College was unaware of any impact.

### **8. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

- 8.1. The Deputy Principal presented a paper on the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire. He highlighted the key points.
  - 8.1.1. The questionnaire had to be signed off by the Accounting Officer and Corporation Chair.
  - 8.1.2. There were no major changes from the previous year apart from Covid-19 coming out and a section on governance being added.

#### **8.2. Governors asked the following questions.**

- 8.2.1. **Would this feed into the annual audits?** The External Auditor replied that this was a key source of evidence for their report.
- 8.2.2. **Would this report go before Corporation?** This report would go before the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

#### **8.3. Governors noted the Financial Self-Assessment Questionnaire.**

### **9. REPORT FROM EXTERNAL AUDITORS**

- 9.1. The External Audit gave the following update.
  - 9.1.1. The final fieldwork had commenced and, so far, there were no major issues.
  - 9.1.2. It was planned that the audit would be completed over the next two to three weeks. Auditors were on target to present a report to the November meeting.

#### **9.2. Governors asked the following questions.**

**9.2.1. Were there any emerging issues?** The policy environment had been quiet over the previous few weeks. As for the broader macroeconomic environment, energy and staff costs were an issue. There was nothing that particularly affected Leicester College.

**9.2.2. Governors asked about pension valuations.** There had been a reduction in the Local Government Pension Scheme which would be seen on the balance sheet.

9.3. The Internal Auditor reported that the auditors were preparing for the first review next week. Everything was going as planned and work was also being undertaken for the governance review.

**9.4. Governors noted the updates provided by both the External and Internal Auditors.**

## **10. REPORT ON GIFT/GOODS RECEIVED BY COLLEGE STAFF**

10.1. The Director of Governance and Policy presented the report on gifts and goods received by College staff.

**10.2. Governors made the following comments.**

**10.2.1. The Audit Committee had previously expressed concern about football tickets being accepted from external organisations, although this had been with regards to the Estates department.** The Deputy Principal replied that tickets had been accepted as a means to network with the wider community. The events attended had been selected for strategic value.

**10.2.2. How the College knew that everything had been declared.** Training had been given to CLT on conflicts of interest and the receipt of goods and gifts. The Director of Governance and Policy had often received reports of items which did not need to be declared which gave her confidence that there had been more overreporting rather than underreporting.

**10.2.3. Governors commented that De Montfort University had a specific policy on hospitality and gifts.** The College had financial regulations and a Gifts and Hospitality Policy which was reviewed every two years.

**10.3. Governors noted the report on gifts/goods received by College staff.**

## **11. REPORT ON SLT EXPENSES**

11.1. The Director of Governance and Policy presented the report on SLT expenses. The following points were highlighted.

11.1.1. The expenses claimed were very small.

11.1.2. The Deputy Principal's expenses related to reimbursed air tickets for the period when he was Acting Principal.

**11.2. Governors noted the report on SLT expenses.**

## **12. COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT**

12.1. The Director of Governance and Policy presented the paper on the Committee's self-assessment. The following points were highlighted.

12.1.1. Governors had identified positive impacts of the Committee.

12.1.2. Areas for improvement included the prioritisation of agenda items and reducing technical jargon.

12.1.3. In response to comments made in the self-assessment survey, agendas had been reviewed to prioritise the student experience and teaching. Agendas would still need to include items which the Governors needed to be aware of.

12.1.4. With regards to some of the technical aspects of the Audit Committee's work, the External Auditors had previously run a training session which could be run again. The Deputy Principal would lead another financial training session later in the year.

12.1.5. It had been hoped that there would be a new member of the Audit Committee starting this term, but the individual had been unable to take up their post.

**12.2.** In response to a **question** about the skills mix on the Board, it was explained that this was something which the Search and Governance Committee considered at every meeting. In light of two governors coming to the end of their terms, the Search and Governance Committee had been considering the need to recruit someone with curriculum experience and another accountant.

**12.3. Governors noted the Committee self-assessment.**

**13. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS NOTIFIED TO THE CHAIR PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

**13.1. It was agreed that the November 2022 meeting would be online and that the March 2022 meeting would be face-to-face.**

**14. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- 22 November 2022, 8am
- 22 March 2023, 8am
- 7 June 2023, 8am