



Full Corporation Meeting

9th July 2025

Time: 6.00 pm
Chair: Mr N Horsfall

Present:

Nick Horsfall	Carol Davies	Stephen Bamber
Bashir Shama	Zahid Tapas	Robert Coyle
Nannette Blackwood	Stuart Merrills	Arshad Ashraf

In Attendance:

Lesley Hart Deputy Principal	Joanne Smith Vice Principal	Nicola Sodano Assistant Principal – Teaching and Learning and Assessment
Andy Lythgoe Assistant Principal – MIS/Learner Administration	Mark Goodwin Assistant Principal – Student Experience	Sarah Ball Assistant Principal - Pastoral
Tracy Tunstall Clerk		

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted by Governors from Carole Swarbrick, Sam Jackson, Mark Rigby, Susan Wright, Anna-Marie Watters, Munaza Muneeb, Glenys Hughes and Karen Hon. Rizvana Aftab was absent.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April 2025 were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

4. Appointment of Support Staff Governor

The formal appointment of Nannette Blackwood as Support Staff Governor for a 4 year term of office ending 9th July 2029 was approved.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

All matters arising would be covered as specific agenda items throughout the meeting.

6. Minutes of the Sub-Committees

(a) Strategy Event

The minutes of the Strategy Event held on 8th May 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.

The Chair of Governors reminded Governors that it had been agreed to change the entry criteria with effect from 1st September 2026 and strategically plan to operate at approximately 1600 students to enhance educational quality, staff well-being and college reputation. The financial forecast had been modelled across all subjects and departments for the next three academic years based on a reduction in student numbers and remains healthy.

(b) Governance and Search Committee

The draft minutes of the Governance and Search Committee held on 21st May 2025 were noted.

The Chair informed Governors that the term of office of Carol Davies was due to expire on 21st September 2025 and that she had expressed a willingness to be re-appointed. This had been considered at the Governance and Search Committee and it is recommended that she is re-appointed for a further 4-year term of office.

Governors unanimously resolved to approve the re-appointment of Carol Davies with effect from 21st September 2025. Her term of office will expire on 21st September 2029.

The Chair drew attention to the draft Action Plan for Governor Development and Improvement and informed Governors that this had been created following the Governance Self-Assessment exercise which had been carried out both individually and within group sessions at the Strategy Event. The Plan was considered and it was agreed that the structured induction programme for new governors should be completed within six months of appointment rather the three month period suggested.

Subject to this amendment Governors resolved to approve the Action Plan for Governor Development and Improvement and agreed that this would continue to be monitored by the Governance and Search Committee.

(c) Risk and Audit Committee

The draft minutes of the Risk and Audit Committee held on 21st May 2025 were **noted**.

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, Mr Bamber outlined key points from the meeting. He reported that Helen Simpson had attended this meeting in her role as Health and Safety Officer and had given a detailed verbal report on the work she has carried out since her appointment.

The Risk Management Policy for 2025/26 had been reviewed, with no changes being necessary, and this was presented for formal approval.

Governors unanimously resolved to approve the Risk Management Policy for 2025/26.

The Health and Safety Officer had reviewed the Health and Safety Policy for 2025/26. She was confident that the policy contained everything which is required and it complied with the HSE. The Health and Safety Policy 2025/26 was presented for formal approval.

Governors unanimously resolved to approve the Health and Safety Policy for 2025/26.

Mr Bamber drew attention to the tendering process which had been undertaken in relation to the appointment of External Auditors, and reported that this had been discussed in detail. The Committee had unanimously resolved to recommend that our current external auditors (Wbg) are appointed for a further 3-year period after submitting a competitive tender for which any additional costs had been included.

Governors unanimously resolved to approve the appointment of Wbg as External Auditors for a 3-year period to carry out an audit of the Financial Statements and an audit of the Teachers' Pension Return for the financial years ending 31st July 2025, 2026 and 2027.

(d) Student Affairs Committee

The draft minutes of the Student Affairs Committee held on 21st May 2025 were **noted**.

The Chair of the Committee informed Governors that the Clerk would be supporting the Student Governors through a bespoke induction programme. Governors were urged to attend the Student Affairs Committee although it was **noted** that this meeting commences at 4.30 pm and it is difficult for some governors to attend due to their work commitments.

(e) Curriculum and Quality Committee

The draft minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee held on 11th June 2025 were **noted**.

The Chair of the Committee drew attention to the purchase of additional iPad caddies which will improve the student to iPad ratio to 1 to 4. He reported that the predicted results for BTEC are particularly positive however some concerns remain about persistent underperformance in some departments. It has been agreed that a Governor will spend time with the Vice Principal to review the Science department processes along with developing an understanding of the changes being implemented within Careers/Skills to mitigate the lack of work experience.

The Admissions Policy and Procedures 2026 had been reviewed and were now presented for formal approval.

Governors unanimously resolved to approve the Admissions Policy and Procedures for students applying for entry in August 2026.

Mr A Ashraf arrived.

(f) Finance and Personnel Committee

The draft minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee held on 19th June 2025 were **noted**.

The Chair of the Committee drew attention to the agreed purchase of solar panels to be installed over the summer period with the contract being awarded to Nightingale Electrical. She also drew attention to the management accounts up to 30th April 2025 which indicated a healthy financial surplus and highlighted that a Reserves Policy and an Investment Policy are to be developed for consideration at a future meeting.

The updated Student Financial Support Policy and Guidance had been reviewed and now presented for formal approval. There was a general discussion and further amendments were agreed.

Subject to the agreed amendments Governors unanimously resolved to approve the Student Financial Support Policy and Guidance.

The Chair of the Committee drew attention to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and reported that employers have a legal duty to publish and review their policy on how they will exercise certain discretionary powers within the scheme. The policy and the College's position on each of the required discretions had been reviewed and now presented for formal approval.

Governors resolved to approve the LGPS Employer Discretionary Payments Policy.

7. Management Accounts to 31st May 2025

The Deputy Principal presented the Management Accounts based on actual Income and Expenditure up to 31st May 2025. She reported that the out-turn position projects a surplus of £1,268,001 against a budget surplus of £479,117. She highlighted that staff costs include the impact of the increased NI Rate and the decreased NI Threshold along with the agreed pay awards. The Deputy Principal reported that the cash position remains healthy and that the bank loan covenants are not breached.

The Deputy Principal drew attention to the High Needs Funding Element 2 and 3 and the length of time this can take before it is received from the local authorities. Governors asked who determines the need and **noted** that the secondary school and NHS medical professionals are involved.

Governors resolved to approve the Management Accounts as at 31st May 2025 projected to 31st July 2025.

8. Strategic Planning

(a) Review of Strategic Development Plan for 2024/25

The Principal presented the Strategic Development Plan for 2024/25 and drew attention to the actions which have been completed and those areas which are still outstanding. A Governor asked if the Principal had any concerns in the areas which remain outstanding and **noted** that this is not the case, these areas just take longer to embed.

The Principal informed Governors that there had been a student-led sustainability group but the students had stopped attending during the academic year, it is hoped that the group will be re-established again in the new academic year.

A Diversity and Inclusion Officer has been appointed and EDI Student Ambassadors are to be recruited. A new financial software package had been included to be implemented in August 2025 however this has now been moved to August 2026.

Governors **noted** the report.

(b) Review of KPIs for 2024/25

The Principal presented the strategic governor dashboard outlining the KPIs for 2024/25. He highlighted the number of staff who had completed training activities. Governors **noted** staff turnover figures and asked that a trend pattern is built in and incorporated into the dashboard.

Governors **noted** the report.

(c) Strategic Development Plan and KPIs for 2025/26

The Principal presented the Strategic Development Plan for 2025/26 and reported that the plan focusses on embedding actions rather than implementing.

Governors resolved to approve the Strategic Development Plan and KPIs for 2025/26.

(d) Risk Register for 2025/26

The Principal informed Governors that the Risk Register for 2025/26 had been produced in tandem with the Strategic Development Plan. He highlighted that Cybersecurity breach or data loss has been added to the Risk Register. All risks have been allocated to the relevant Governors' committee for monitoring purposes.

Governors resolved to approve the Risk Register for 2025/26.

(e) Financial Forecasts:

Budget for 2025/26 and Financial Forecast 2026/27

The Deputy Principal informed Governors that the Budget for 2025/26 and Financial Forecast for 2026/27 had been prepared in accordance with the assumptions as outlined and that this supports the strategic plan. She reported that she has provided a forecast for 2027/28 and 2028/29 to demonstrate the planned decrease in student numbers and the effect of this impact with lagged student funding to give an indication on financial security based on the assumptions made. The biggest drop in student numbers will take effect in 2027/28.

The Deputy Principal drew attention to the DfE Financial Ratios and the comparison against benchmarks. She also drew attention to the balance sheet and informed Governors that the College does not carry huge debtors and liabilities and that the cash position is healthy.

Governors resolved to approve the Budget for 2025/26 and the Financial Forecast for 2026/27.

9. Principal's Report

The Principal spoke to his report. He drew attention to A Level Results Day on 14th August and invited Governors to attend. Attendance at the new Student Day was almost the same number as last year.

Retention has marginally increased in comparison to last year and remains above the national benchmark figure of 88% in 2024.

Governors noted the report.

10. Approval of Policies:

(a) Provider Access Legislation Policy 2025/26

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience informed Governors that the Provider Access Policy had been reviewed and updated and was now presented to Governors for approval.

Governors resolved to approve the Provider Access Legislation Policy for 2025/26.

(b) Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy 2025/26

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience presented the CEIAG Policy for approval. He reported that the college is moving towards providing more Live Briefs to enable students to experience different work settings. He informed Governors that the policy is embedded into all areas of the curriculum to ensure that students are well informed and equipped for the next step of their career journey.

Governors resolved to approve the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy for 2025/26.

11. Link Governor Updates

(a) Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

The Link Governor report on Looked After and Previously Looked After Children was noted.

(b) Careers

The Link Governor for Careers and Skills gave a detailed verbal report of this outstanding department. He highlighted the change in personnel due to maternity leave and the additional knowledge and experience being provided by the temporary maternity cover. Some changes have been made to the requirements of the Gatsby Benchmarks which will be rolled out from September 2025. The Professional Growth Programme is now well established and is a feature on all students' timetables. He drew attention to the plans and priorities for the department for 2025-26.

(c) Safeguarding

The Link Governor report on Safeguarding was noted.

(d) SEND

The Link Governor report on SEND would be presented to Governors in December.

12. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of Governors

The Chair informed Governors that the positions of Chair and Vice Chair are appointed on an annual basis. He reported that Governors can nominate themselves for either position and that nominations should be received by the Clerk by 1st September 2025.

13. Schedule of Meetings 2025/26

The Schedule of Governors' Meetings for 2025/26 was circulated for Governors' information.

14. Any Other Business

There was none.

15. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 24th September 2025 at 6.00 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.35 pm.