



## Full Corporation Meeting

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025

Time: 6.00 pm  
Chair: Mr N Horsfall

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### Present:

Nick Horsfall	Mark Rigby	Glenys Hughes
Andy Lythgoe	Stephen Bamber	Sam Jackson
Carol Davies	Robert Coyle	Zahid Tapas
Karen Hon	Stuart Merrills	Anna-Marie Watters
Carole Swarbrick	Susan Wright	

### In Attendance:

Lesley Hart Deputy Principal	Joanne Smith Vice Principal	Nicola Sodano Assistant Principal – Teaching and Learning
Tracy Tunstall Clerk		

The Chair welcomed Karen Hon and Anna-Marie Watters to their first meeting of the Full Corporation.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted by Governors from Bashir Shama, Mark Goodwin and Sarah Ball.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

#### **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

##### **(a) Minute 6 - Individual Governor Annual Review Meetings**

The Vice Chair of Governors reported that he had now met with all Governors, with the exception of one which was still outstanding, and gave a brief report of his findings so far. He reported that Governors are involved in many events which take place in College and through Link Governor roles. He had found the exercise to be a positive experience and will give a more detailed report at the Strategy Event in order that the outcomes can be incorporated into the Governance Self-Assessment and improvement plan.

##### **(b) Minute 6 – Funding of BTEC courses 2025/26**

The Principal informed Governors that all BTEC courses will be funded in 2025/26 however some with end the following year.

#### **5. Appointment of External Governor**

The Chair informed Governors that Mr Arshad Iqbal Ashraf, Principal of Eden Boys' School, had expressed an interest in becoming a Governor and had been introduced by Bashir Shama. Mr Ashraf has completed an application form and references have been received. The Principal, Chair and Clerk had recently met with Mr Ashraf and recommend his appointment as Governor.

A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed that Mr Ashraf is appointed as Governor for a four year term of office ending 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2029.

#### **6. Appointment of Parent Governors**

The Chair informed Governors that the Clerk had circulated details of the Parent Governor vacancies to all parents/carers and as a result there were two expressions of interest. As the number of candidates was equal to the number of vacancies a voting procedure was not necessary, as the candidates are elected unopposed. The Principal, Chair and Clerk had recently met with both candidates to outline their role as Parent Governor and references have been received. The Chair proposed that Mrs Munaza Muneeb and Mrs Rizvana Aftab are appointed.

It was unanimously agreed that Mrs Muneeb and Mrs Aftab are appointed as Parent Governors for a four year term of office ending 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2029.

#### **7. Resignation of Staff Governor**

The Chair informed Governors that Andy Lythgoe has been promoted to the post of Assistant Principal: Student Information and Data and as such has tendered his resignation as Support Staff Governor with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025. He will continue to attend some Governors' meetings in his new role as Assistant Principal.

The process for appointing a new Support Staff Governor will take place in the summer term.

## **8. Minutes of the Sub-Committees**

### **(a) Governance and Search Committee**

The draft minutes of the Governance and Search Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were noted.

The Chair drew attention to the Governors' Self-Assessment exercise and highlighted that this should be carried out annually with the exception of the year in which an external review has taken place. The Principal and Clerk had looked at various framework options and recommended that this year the self-assessment exercise is based on the Association of Colleges (AoC) Further Education Code of Good Governance which was adopted by the Full Corporation at its meeting in September 2024. The Clerk will re-circulate the Code, along with a questionnaire, for all Governors to complete prior to the Strategy Event. Further work will take place at the Strategy Event to create an improvement plan.

The Chair drew attention to the regular monitoring of governor attendance at meetings and to the revised completion dates for some aspects of the action plan to be completed which was established following the external governance review.

### **(b) Risk and Audit Committee**

The draft minutes of the Risk and Audit Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 were noted.

The acting Chair of the Committee drew attention to the recommendation that each Committee has a standing agenda item to review the controls outlined on the Risk Register which are assigned to that particular Committee. This will ensure that Governors are satisfied that controls are effective or to address any concerns.

The acting Chair of the Committee highlighted that the tendering process for the appointment of External Auditors was due to take place and recommendations for appointment would be brought to the next meeting for approval.

### **(c) Finance and Personnel Committee**

The draft minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 were noted.

The Chair of the Committee reported that a full review of policies has not taken place for some time however this is now underway with responsibilities allocated amongst the SLT. Statutory policies requiring Governor approval are incorporated into the governance cycle of business ensuring compliance.

Governors noted that a Health and Safety Officer has been appointed and will take up her post from 7<sup>th</sup> April.

The Chair of the Committee highlighted the increase in total staff numbers from 156 to 172 with notable increases within the Science department.

The annual pay awards have now been agreed for both teaching and support staff.

#### **(d) Student Affairs Committee**

The draft minutes of the Student Affairs Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 were noted.

The Principal drew attention to the events which have taken place and congratulated the students on raising significant amounts of money for the various charities supported this year. He highlighted the answer to his question to students about whether they felt that the College systems protected them on-line and whether they felt sufficiently educated about how to stay safe when not using College systems. Students felt that college systems were effective, however many had wider safety concerns outside of college and wanted more advice on this. The Principal reported that this has now been incorporated into lessons and tutor sessions.

#### **(e) Curriculum and Quality Committee**

The draft minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 were noted.

The Vice Principal reported that a detailed report had been given on the latest assessment data and that areas of concern had been highlighted and interventions put in place. She drew attention to the Science Department update and reported that the new Deputy Director of Science was settling in well in the department. There is now more stability in the department and the team are working well together.

The Vice Principal reported that Governors had received a comprehensive Teaching and Learning update and highlighted that the VESPA framework has been re-launched and well received by staff.

A Governor asked if exam results will improve this summer and the Vice Principal reported that it is hoped that there will be marginal gains.

### **9. Approval of the Annual Accountability Statement**

The Principal presented the updated Accountability Statement which has been produced by Mrs Errington, Skills Nominee, and highlighted the changes which have been made to this year's statement, in order to meet the local skills need. He informed Governors that the report must be approved by the Full Corporation and lodged with the DfE. He reported that in terms of socio-economic terms, the College's intake is well below average and using the English indices of deprivation 2019 measure, 86% of students are drawn from the bottom 50% of districts nationally which has increased by 22%. The Principal informed Governors that the College is committed to sustainable actions and our Sustainability Working Group is working with the whole college community to evaluate and reduce our environmental impact. The college's overall vision is to immerse digital technology with traditional teaching methods to develop a hybrid learning environment that promotes the development of digital skills for both staff and students.

A Governor highlighted the recent EdTech Event held in College and informed Governors that this had been an outstanding event which had been well received by all who had attended.

***Governors thanked Mrs Errington for her report and resolved to approve the Accountability Statement for 2025/26 and authorised that the Chair of Governors and the Principal sign the statement and forward this to the DfE.***

## **10. Safeguarding Update**

The Principal presented the Safeguarding Report and Update on behalf of the Assistant Principal: Safeguarding. He highlighted that the number of incidents and safeguarding concerns increase year on year and that access to external support services are not readily available. A Governor asked if students arrive in College with issues that have not been dealt with at secondary school and **noted** that schools are doing a lot. However the increase is often driven by awareness, national trend and social media. The number of Looked After Children (LAC) in Bolton is also ever increasing. A Governor asked if there has been an impact following the increase in unregulated childrens' home for 16-18 year olds often with complex needs. The Link Governor for LACs is aware that there are LACs in college who are effectively looking after themselves.

Governors **noted** that our students are supported and well cared for but there was concern about the lack of available external support agencies and the impact that this has on our staff.

## **11. Management Accounts to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

The Deputy Principal presented the Management Accounts based on actual Income and Expenditure up to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025. She reported that the out-turn position projects a surplus of £708,819 against a budget surplus of £479,117.

The Deputy Principal highlighted the High Needs Element 2 and Element 3 Funding and reported that Element 2 funding comes direct from the DfE and is based on 28 Students. The Element 3 funding comes from the relevant Local Authority who controls the funding. A case is put forward based on individual student need. Unfortunately at the time of producing these accounts, no funding has been received from Bury, Salford and Manchester Councils. The Deputy Principal reported that we are significantly under-funded in this area and it is difficult to contact the Local Authority regarding this due to staff turnover and their tracking systems not being effective.

The Deputy Principal reported that staff costs include the impact of the increase in NI Rate and the decreased NI Threshold and also include a pay award of 3.5% from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and 5.5% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 together with increase in the National Minimum Wage. She informed Governors that no assumption has been made in relation to funding these increased rates.

Governors **noted** that the cash position remains healthy and that the Bank loan covenants are not breached.

***Governors resolved to approve the Management Accounts as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 projected to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025.***

## **12. Approval of Curriculum Changes for 2025/26**

The Vice Principal gave an update on the curriculum changes for September 2025. She highlighted the BTEC courses which have been defunded from August 2025 and first delivery of the Level 3 AAQ courses which will replace them. She also highlighted that A Level French will be offered this September with several students already expressing interest in enrolling for the course.

The Principal reported that there will be no significant changes in 2025/26 however there will be three significant BTEC courses withdrawn in 2026/27 for which there are no direct replacements being offered at this stage.

Governors **resolved to approve the curriculum changes for 2025/26.**

### **13. Strategic Plan Update**

The Principal reported that the summary dashboard has been created at the request of Governors. He informed Governors that there were no areas of concern. He highlighted that staff turnover has been added to the dashboard and that whilst there is a significant turnover of cleaning staff, the whole college staff turnover would continue to be monitored.

Governors considered the student satisfaction survey responses and asked for clarification as to why students do not feel that they have regular opportunities to engage in curriculum enrichment opportunities. The Principal reported that this is lower than would like however 100+ students are undertaking re-sits in GCSE English and Maths and as a result of this they are simply not getting the opportunity.

Governors asked if there are any students not engaging with any opportunities and **noted** that there are very few students in this category now and that individuals are being supported on an individual basis. Governors asked that the number of students not engaging in any enrichment opportunities is included in future reports.

### **14. Review of the Risk Register 2024/25**

The Principal informed Governors that the Risk Register had been discussed in detail and significantly revised by the Risk and Audit Committee. More monitoring detail has been included and specific risks have been allocated to the individual committees with responsibility for oversight. The Principal will update the Risk Register following each committee meeting. Governors welcomed the improved changes to the Risk Register.

Governors **noted** the Risk Register for 2024/25.

### **15. Principal's Report**

The Principal spoke to his report. He drew attention to the Curriculum and Assessment Review which has been commissioned by the Government whereby a panel of experts are reviewing the existing national curriculum and statutory assessment system in England. He highlighted the link to the Interim Report for Governors to access.

The Principal highlighted that the 16-19 funding rate will rise by 3.78% in 2025/26, moving from £4,843 to £5,026 per student and reported that the support staff pay agreement for 2024/25 has now been agreed.

The Principal informed Governors that the total number of applications for a place in the Sixth Form is down by 18 students however more interviews have been conducted this year. A Governor asked if there was a drop-off trend from certain schools and **noted** that the feeder

schools are generally the same, other schools have declined however students are now being attracted to the college across a wider area. A Governor asked what the pull-factor was for those students applying from a wider area and Principal responded that the college building and the quality of what is offered here was the attraction.

Governors **noted** the report.

## **16. Link Governor Update**

### **(a) Digital Strategy**

Zahid Tapas informed Governors that he had met with the Assistant Principal: Teaching and Learning and the Teaching and Learning Coach regarding the gradual implementation of educational technology solutions across the Sixth Form. He drew attention to his report and outlined the achievements and positive developments along with areas for improvement. He encouraged all Governors to sit in some lessons to see how the digital platforms have been adopted by different departments and how these are used. A Governor **noted** that some staff are more developed in using the platforms than others and asked whether some staff did not want to embrace the technology. The Assistant Principal: Teaching and Learning informed Governors that this was not the case but reported that there are simply not enough I-Pads available.

### **(b) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Susan Wright informed Governors that she had met with the Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and that they had looked at the Diversity Report in detail. She was impressed with the work being carried out in this challenging area and **noted** that new initiatives are being explored. The Head of EDI had recommended that Mrs Wright undertake some on-line courses which she has done. A further meeting has been arranged after the exams have taken place. Mrs Wright expressed concern with the workload required in addition to a teaching commitment but was assured that this is manageable.

## **17. Any Other Business**

### **(a) Prevent Duty – Course for Governors**

The Clerk reminded Governors to book onto the Prevent Duty course. It has been agreed that this is mandatory for all governors to complete.

### **(b) Governors' Self-Assessment**

As previously discussed earlier in the meeting, the Clerk will circulate the self-assessment questionnaire along with the Code for Governors to complete. It is mandatory that all governors complete this by 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Further work on creating an improvement plan will be carried out at the Strategy Event on 8<sup>th</sup> May.

**18. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be the annual Strategy Event which will be held on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 from 5.00 pm to 8.00 pm.

The next meeting of the Full Corporation will be held on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 6.00 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.30 pm.