

# Waltham Forest College



## THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2025

### MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION

Antoinette Beekye	apologies	Staff Member
John Bell	present	Member
Paul Butler	present	Member, Chair of the Corporation, Safeguarding Champion
Paul Clarke	present	Member
Kathryn Davies	apologies	Member
Simon Deschenes	present	Member
Janet Gardner	present	Member, Principal & Chief Executive Member
Richard Harris	present	Member
Susannah Hume	apologies	Member, SEND Champion
Thamilarasi Jasitharan	present	Staff Member
Remi Iyun	present	Member, EDI Champion
Bryan Johnston	present	Member
Alison Morris	present	Member, Corporation Vice Chair, Chair of C & Q, Skills Champion
Renatta Nzomono	present	Member, Chair of A & R
Amir Seyyad	present	Member, Chair of F & R
Leon Smith	present	Member, Health & Safety Champion
Gbeminiyi Soyinka	present	Member
Ozora Agota Lazar	present	Student Member
Adam Islam	present	Student Member

### CLERK TO THE CORPORATION

Naomi Shoffman                      Director of Governance (DoGov)

### IN ATTENDANCE

Abena Rodman -Tay	Deputy CEO (DCEO)
Rachael Booth	Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)
Amir Ahmed	Vice Principal (VP)
Melanie Price	Director of Human Resource (DoHR)
Michael Burgoyne	Assistant Principal HE & Academic Standards (AP)
Karen Lea - Observer	Hopwood Hall College
Matthew Taylor -Observer	Hopwood Hall College

**Due to the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) the Corporation agreed that meetings may be held using Teams videoconferencing as per the Waltham Forest College Instrument & Articles, Instrument 1 (g).**

## **68.25 APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR**

The Corporation, having considered the recommendation from the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee, approved the appointment of Mr Deschenes as a Governor to the Corporation and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee for the full four-year term.

Mr Deschenes was invited to join the meeting.

## **69.25 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair, formally opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. Apologies for absence were received from Ms Beekye and Ms Hume who are both on maternity leave, and Ms Davies due to illness. The Chair reminded everyone that the papers will be taken as read, most of which have already been scrutinised by the relevant committees, and asked that presenters highlight key points in their reports in order to allow sufficient time for discussion debate and questions

## **70.25 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None

## **71.25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS CORPORATION MEETING 21 OCTOBER 2025**

The Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 8 July 2025, were agreed by the Corporation to be signed by the Chair as a true record. The DoGov confirmed that all actions have either been completed or have not yet reached target date.

## **72.25 MATTERS ARISING**

**None**

## **73.25 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2024–25**

The DCEO presented the following reports and documents which had been previously presented by the financial statements' auditors and thoroughly scrutinised by the Board at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025:

- Financial Statements Report 2024-25.
- Audit Findings Report.
- Regularity Audit Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SARQ).
- Letter of Representation

The final draft presented here incorporates the changes, and amendments agreed with the Financial Statements Auditors at that meeting. The annual accounts key highlights are:

- Surplus: The College reported a surplus and , maintained its "Outstanding" financial health rating.
- Total income: increased by 5.8%, with the majority of income derived from public funding.
- Cash Reserves: the increase in cash balances was well above sector benchmarks
- The reduction in the Local Government Pension Scheme deficit
- Audit Opinion:
  - The Financial Statements were deemed to provide a true and fair view of the College's financial position.
  - Compliance was confirmed with UK GAAP and the College Accounts Direction.
- Regularity Audit: The regularity audit confirmed that income and expenditure were applied for their intended purposes and aligned with governing authorities. No material issues were identified.

## **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE:**

- **THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2024-25 AND THE AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT**
- **THE REGULARITY AUDIT REPORT**
- **THE LETTER OF REPRESENTATION**

#### **74.25 SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) 2024/25 AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) 2025/26**

The DPCQ and APHE provided a detailed update on the College's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2024/25 and the accompanying Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2025/26. They advised as follows:

- The College was operating under the previous inspection framework until 10 November.
- The College continues to self-assess as Outstanding overall.
- The validation process has confirmed the College's outstanding self-assessment judgement.
- The SAR is evaluative, evidence-based, and clearly aligned to the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework. It draws on a comprehensive range of evidence, including performance and achievement data, learner outcomes and destinations, stakeholder and employer feedback, staff self-assessment, functional skills outcomes, external benchmarks, and illustrative case studies.
- Additional sections have been incorporated to reflect changes in the inspection toolkit, including the inclusion of functional skills performance and impact-focused case studies.
- The SAR was updated following feedback from the validation panel, with refinements made to ensure clarity, robustness, and consistency.
- Ongoing review of the teacher learning and assessment framework was also highlighted as part of the College's continuous improvement approach.
- Strengths identified within the SAR include the quality of education, high levels of learner achievement and progression, strong employer engagement, effective safeguarding arrangements, and positive learner and staff experiences.
- Areas for improvement are clearly articulated within the SAR, with an emphasis on sustaining high standards, improving attendance, narrowing identified gaps, and strengthening consistency across provision.
- The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) priorities for improvement are clearly defined, appropriately resourced, and subject to regular monitoring. Progress against the QIP is scrutinised through the Curriculum and Quality Committee, providing assurance that actions are implemented effectively and are having impact.

#### **Discussion Points**

In response to a question, the Principal confirmed that the validation process included both internal and external participants, providing independent challenge and assurance to the self-assessment judgements.

The Chair of the Committee commented positively on the clarity with which strengths were articulated within the SAR and welcomed the balanced and evaluative tone of the document.

#### **THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE OVERALL SAR GRADING OF "OUTSTANDING" AND THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) FOR 2025/26.**

#### **75.25 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024–25**

The DoGov presented the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee, which provided assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements.

Internal audit activity covered a comprehensive range of risk areas, including financial controls, health and safety, cyber security, sustainability, and human resources. The overall conclusion confirmed that the College has adequate and effective risk management, control, and governance processes in place.

External auditors issued an unqualified true and fair opinion on the financial statements and a clean regularity audit opinion. The Audit and Risk Committee self-assessed its effectiveness as Outstanding.

The DoGov advised that this report has been considered by the Audit and Risk Committee and recommended to the Corporation for approval.

#### **THE CORPORATION APPROVED THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024-25.**

## **76.25 PRINCIPAL'S COLLEGE REPORT**

The Principal provided an overview of the College's strong performance and positive trajectory across learner numbers, achievement, financial health, and strategic influence within the FE sector. The update highlighted sustained growth, improving outcomes, and the College's active role in national and regional policy discussions as follows:

- **Student Recruitment and Performance** - Student recruitment for 16–18 learners continues to show significant growth year on year. Numbers have increased steadily demonstrating the College's growing demand for its provision. Achievement rates across all ages remain strong and consistently above national and provider group comparators. Achievement improved by 7% compared to 2019/20 rates. These outcomes exceed the national rate of 85.2% and the provider group average of 85.5%, evidencing sustained quality in teaching, learning, and assessment.
- **Income and Financial Trends** - The College's income has increased significantly over time. This reflects growth in learner numbers, effective funding strategies, and diversification of income streams. As of 31 October 2025, the College reported a year-to-date increase in surplus against the budgeted surplus, representing a positive variance. The College's forecast outstanding financial health score is 250 points.
- **Political and Sector Engagement** - The Principal highlighted extensive engagement at national and regional level. This included participation in a BusinessLDN roundtable linked to the launch of the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper. The College also took part in the 'Get Britain Working' launch roundtable. Waltham Forest College was noted as the only Vanguard Employer involved in a national initiative bringing employers together with government to address ill health and workforce participation. Additional sector engagement included contributions to the 'Building a World Class Curriculum for All' (CAR) agenda and attendance at the Mayor of London's Inclusive Talent Strategy launch.
- **Strategic Priority: Excellence & Innovation** - Progress under the Excellence and Innovation priority was strong. The College was shortlisted for the 'Good for Me, Good for FE' award in recognition of student volunteering and fundraising activity. It hosted a Department for Education consultation on Post-16 Curriculum Pathways, during which the DfE commented on how impressed they were with the students generally and also the new uniforms some are wearing as part of their professional development; the College also welcomed several good practice visits, including SEND-focused visits from West London College and Business and T Level visits from South Orbital College. Senior leaders undertook an immersion visit to Hopwood Hall College, and Waltham Forest College contributed multiple case studies to inform DfE strategic planning guidance, LSIP revisions, and national guidance on enrichment. A Teaching and Learning Conference was also delivered during the term.
- **Strategic Priority: People & Culture** - Significant investment in staff and culture was reported. A staff pay award was implemented in September 2025. The Living London Wage increased from November 2025. The College signed up to the DfE Staff Wellbeing Charter and introduced a range of wellbeing and recognition initiatives. Further developments included the launch of a staff perks and benefits scheme, continued access to an Employee Assistance Programme, and participation as a Vanguard Employer. Leadership capacity is being strengthened through middle manager talent training and senior manager development programmes. A menopause support network was also established, supported by specialist external expertise from FE consultants and NHS clinicians.
- **Strategic Priority: Skills & Careers** - The College showcased good practice in careers education at the AoC Conference in partnership with the Gatsby Foundation. Employer engagement was strong during Term 1. The first cohort of learners commenced a healthcare bootcamp following a successful funding bid. Work also progressed on the development of a recruitment agency model in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions and the London Borough of Waltham Forest Employment and Skills Team. Progress relating to the Office for Students (OfS) was also noted.
- **Strategic Priority: Growth & Sustainability** - Recruitment of 16–19 learners exceeded expectations. This growth underpins the College's financial resilience and future sustainability.
- **Strategic Priority: Estates & Facilities** - Work continued on the Estates Strategy, including the search for additional space and progress with planning permission. Timetabling projects were underway, supported by an external audit of space utilisation and timetabling effectiveness. A commissioned condition survey informed ongoing estates planning, alongside refurbishment works to toilet facilities. Sustainability actions focused on reducing the College's carbon footprint.

The Principal also presented the Accountability Statement progress update for approval, highlighting considerable progress so far against the KPIs set.

### **Discussion Points**

Governors commended the college being the only Vanguard employer involved in the national initiative and discussed this and the implications further. Also discussed was how employers engage with the College both in curriculum planning and providing employment opportunities.

The student governors reported back on how well the new uniform policy has been received for certain course and that they personally take pride in wearing theirs.

Governors noted that financial resilience has enabled the College to invest strategically in staff pay, wellbeing, professional development, curriculum innovation, digital infrastructure, and estate planning, while maintaining a strong focus on value for money.

The Governors noted the strong progress in key priority sectors as demonstrated in the Accountability Statement Progress Report and that it should position the college well for the new LSIP

### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:**

- **APPROVE THE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT**
- **NOTE THE STRONG PERFORMANCE OVERALL AGAINST THE FINANCIAL AND QUALITY KPIs FOR 2025/26**
- **NOTE THE CONTINUED STRONG TREND OF GROWTH FOR 16–18-YEAR-OLD STUDENTS**

## **77.25 POLICIES/DOCUMENTS FOR APPROVAL**

### **i. Treasury Management Policy**

The DPFR presented the revised Treasury Management Policy as part of its annual governance and assurance responsibilities. She highlighted the changes as follows:

- **Monitoring and Performance Management** section has been strengthened to improve monitoring and performance management of treasury activities, with clearer accountability, more frequent liquidity checks, and explicit counterparty credit controls.
- **Payment Controls and Fraud Prevention** - Strengthened payment control framework, covering segregation of duties, dual authorisation, approved banking channels and tighter controls over online platforms used for fund transmission. This update tightens fraud prevention and operational controls.
- **Formal Delegation of Treasury Limits** -The approval limits for the Principal (or Deputy CEO) have been increased to reflecting the day-to-day liquidity management requirements and increased cash reserves. This approval will be in conjunction, with either of, the Chair(s) of Finance and Resources or Corporation.

### **Discussion Points**

Governors discussed the revised delegation framework, noting that the increase in the Principal's delegated authority to approve treasury transactions reflects the College's day-to-day liquidity management needs and increased cash reserves. Governors agreed that the word Nominee should be replaced with Deputy CEO for clarity. The DCEO emphasised that this delegation is appropriately constrained by strict limits on the types of investments permitted, which are restricted to low-risk instruments, including the College's primary banking provider and short-term or notice deposit accounts with approved counterparties. The policy explicitly excludes speculative, open-ended, or discretionary investment products.

Governors discussed the importance of having a robust investment strategy. The DCEO said this is being drafted currently will come to the Board next term. The Chair of the Finance and Resources committee assured governors that there are mechanisms in place to support investments currently but needs to be formalised in one strategy.

Governors further noted that any investment decisions above £5m up to £10m require approval by the Finance and Resources Committee, and any commitments above £10m or involving longer-term investment horizons require full

Corporation approval. This tiered approach was agreed to provide robust oversight while enabling operational efficiency.

The Corporation discussed the importance of maintaining sufficient liquidity to meet operational needs, manage risk, and support strategic investment, while ensuring that treasury activity remains compliant, transparent, and proportionate to the College's risk appetite. Governors were assured that treasury management arrangements are aligned to the College's Growth and Sustainability strategic aim and provide an appropriate balance between prudence and flexibility.

## **ii. Reserves Policy**

The DPFR presented the revised Reserves Policy which has been updated to include the clarification to the definition of free reserves to align with Charity SORP and FRS 102. This ensures that reserves reported as available are genuinely liquid and readily accessible to meet liabilities as they fall due, improving transparency and consistency in financial reporting.

### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:**

- **APPROVE THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY, SUBJECT TO THE CHANGE AGREED,**
- **APPROVE THE RESERVES POLICY**

## **78.25. ESTATES STRATEGY**

The DCEO presented the draft Estates Strategy and outlined the college's projected space requirements and growth trajectory to 2030. She highlighted the following key points:

- The strategy identifies a need for an additional 7,000m<sup>2</sup> to accommodate forecast student growth and curriculum developments, including the rollout of T Levels and future V Levels. It was noted that the college is already operating at full capacity, creating an urgent need for solutions to address space constraints.
- A revised forecast for student numbers was shared, reflecting a more cautious approach following feedback from the Department for Education (DfE).
- The key challenges, including the requirement for further classroom space and the need to maximise use of existing facilities, potentially through increased class sizes. Several options to address space limitations were outlined.
- The condition of the current estate, which requires significant refurbishment due to ageing infrastructure. A new DfE-commissioned condition report, expected in early spring, will provide more detailed insight into the state of the buildings.
- The College has already commissioned a building conditions survey, and the report has been included in the Estates Strategy.
- Immediate solutions under consideration include leasing additional properties to manage growth. Following feedback from the Finance and Resources committee the strategy has been updated to include management's preferred options for both immediate and future actions, supported by the agreed parameters.

### **Discussion points**

The critical nature of the risks around the space issue and the importance of balancing short-term measures with long-term planning. Although new construction remains the preferred option, the college faces funding and timeline constraints that limit its immediate viability. The Principal noted the challenges in specifying options given recent policy changes and the limitations of short-term leases. She also confirmed that she had looked at various sites, one of which may be suitable. In response to a question, she advised that she had already checked whether there was any capacity in local council school buildings, which there isn't.

The range of strategic options to address these challenges- in the short term, Governors supported the preferred option to lease additional space of approximately 1,000–3,000m<sup>2</sup> within the Waltham Forest borough. This option was considered pragmatic and flexible, enabling the College to relieve immediate capacity pressures, minimise disruption, and avoid significant upfront capital expenditure. Governors noted that any leased accommodation would be subject to careful consideration of location, suitability for curriculum delivery, refurbishment costs, lease terms (including break clauses), and long-term value for money.

In the medium to long term, the Strategy identifies securing a new site as the preferred option to support sustainable growth, curriculum expansion, and long-term estate rationalisation. Governors acknowledged that this option would require careful planning, partnership working, and significant capital investment, but agreed that it provides the most coherent framework for future-proofing the College estate and aligning with long-term strategic objectives.

The Corporation discussed the importance of aligning estates decisions with financial sustainability, learner experience, staff wellbeing, and environmental responsibility. Governors were assured that the Estates Strategy will act as the framework for future capital investment decisions and will be kept under regular review as learner demand, funding, and policy contexts evolve.

#### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE THE ESTATES STRATEGY.**

#### **79.25. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2024–25**

The DoGov presented the Annual Governance Report, which reviewed the effectiveness of the Board and its Committees during 2024–25. approval as recommended by the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee. She highlighted the following points:

- The Corporation’s strong performance against the AoC Code of Good Governance, with all Committees and overall governance graded Outstanding.
- High levels of governor attendance,
- effective scrutiny,
- a strong culture of challenge and support were noted.
- The skills audit identified key strengths alongside targeted areas for enhancement, including safeguarding oversight, community engagement, and estates expertise. The Governance Action Plan for 2025–26 addresses these priorities.

#### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2024-25**

#### **80.25 STUDENT GOVERNOR REPORT**

The Student Governors presented a detailed and engaging report on student engagement, leadership initiatives, and event highlights. They highlighted the following points:

- Positive engagement was evidenced through successful Students’ Union elections with approximately one hundred learners participating, the re-election of the SU President, and the establishment of a full officer team.
- Active participation in sports and societies was reported, including competitive activity and the establishment of badminton and netball clubs, alongside aspirations to increase female participation in football.
- Student-led Black History Month activities were well attended and supported inclusion.
- Curriculum enrichment was strong, with employer engagement visits from Mercedes-Benz, Ford, and Jet2 providing learners with insight into career pathways and apprenticeships.
- Insights from the Student Governors’ attendance at the AoC Conference.
- Jack Petchey Achievement Awards Recognised outstanding student achievements, with winners from diverse academic areas boosting community morale.
- This term’s Student Council meeting, which was attended by approximately 150 class representatives, demonstrated effective student voice, including discussion of learning strategies and the role of AI in learning.
- Initiative for next term: Establishing a WFC Women’s Football team

The Chair thanked the two student governors for their report and asked that for their next report they think about what they may need from the Board to support new initiatives.

#### **THE CORPORATION NOTED THE REPORT.**

#### **81.25 HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

The Director of HR presented the HR Report in detail, focusing on workforce stability, capacity, wellbeing, and emerging strategic risks. She and highlighted the following points:

- Overall headcount remains stable at 427 employees and that early-term turnover is significantly lower than the previous year, however this typically increases later in the academic year,
- Sickness absence in the context of local government and national benchmarks. The significantly lower absence levels and explored contributory factors, including improved wellbeing initiatives, management support, and early intervention. Seasonal pressures may impact absence later in the year, and monitoring will continue.
- The Talent Programme cohort-based approach, focus on live organisational projects, and relevance to day-to-day roles were highlighted as strengths.
- The Managed Service Provider (MSP) contract is showing early improvements in recruitment efficiency, turnaround times, and cost control. A formal review with CPC has been scheduled,
- Pay gap analysis across gender, ethnicity, and disability shows that while some gaps reflect sector-wide challenges and workforce composition, they require sustained and targeted mitigation action.
- The anticipated Employment Rights Bill is a key emerging risk. Assurance was provided that proactive reviews of contracts and policies are underway and that strong union relationships mitigate risk.

#### **Discussion points:**

Turnover- Governors requested more granular trend analysis in future reports to support ongoing scrutiny.

Talent Programme - Governors discussed the positive feedback from participants and noted the strategic value of the programme in developing leadership capability, succession planning, and organisational culture. Expansion of the programme in future years was discussed, subject to evaluation of impact and capacity.

Managed Service Provider - Governors expressed interest in understanding longer-term value for money and workforce planning implications.

The risks around the Employment Rights Bill.

### **THE CORPORATION NOTED THE HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT.**

#### **82.25 SAFEGUARDING & PREVENT REPORT**

The VP presented his report and highlighted the following key points:

- The college reported on the details of safeguarding referrals including trends in different categories
- The top three categories for safeguarding were dominated by mental health concerns.
- Mental health remains the top category, with proactive measures like mental health ambassadors and collaborations with universities enhancing support.
- The report highlights early identification of learners and fewer repeat referrals, indicating targeted outcomes and timely support.
- The oversight of vulnerable learners and the improved communication with curriculum teams.
- Appropriate Safeguarding and Prevent training with contextualised content for governors has now been completed.

#### **Discussion points:**

The increase in vulnerable learners and whether it was due to better identification or an actual increase in incidents, the VP responded that it was a mix of both, with improved onboarding processes and communication with local authorities. The Principal added that the increase in overall student numbers and national policy changes could lead to more vulnerable students joining the college in the future.

The reduction in asylum seekers, the VP explained this was due to relocation to other areas in the UK.

Safeguarding team capacity in light of the increase in referrals and vulnerable learners.

### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO NOTE THE SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT.**

### **83.25 SUBCONTRACTING UPDATE**

The DCEO presented an update on subcontracting arrangements and strategic partnerships. in line with previously approved plan.

#### **THE CORPORATION NOTED THE REPORT.**

### **84. 25 CURRICULUM & QUALITY REPORT**

The interim DPCQ presented the report which the Curriculum and Quality Committee had scrutinised in detail and invited questions/comments. The Board noted the strong start to the academic year and welcomed the continued focus on Teaching, Learning and Assessments.

The Chair of the Committee highlighted the excellent outcome in the Socio-Economic Impact of Waltham Forest College report

#### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO NOTE THE PROGRESS ON THE KEY ASPECTS OF CURRICULUM AND QUALITY.**

### **85.25 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2025-26 – MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR 31 OCTOBER 2025**

The DPFR presented the management accounts to October 2025 which the Finance and Resources Committee had scrutinised in detail, confirming strong performance against KPIs and a positive forecast for 2025/26. No further questions/comments were raised.

#### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO NOTE THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR 31 OCTOBER 2025**

### **86.25 HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT**

The DCEO presented the Health & Safety Update providing a detailed overview of the College's current health and safety status, focusing on incident reporting, compliance measures, up-to-date training, progress on business continuity planning, and forthcoming Martyn's Law training.

#### **THE CORPORATION AGREED TO:**

- **NOTE THE CONTENTS OF THE REPORT.**
- **NOTE THE KEY RISKS BEING MANAGED BY THE COLLEGE AND ACTIONS TAKEN.**

### **87.25 RISK MANAGEMENT -REVIEW OF THE UPDATED RISK REGISTER**

The DCEO presented the Finance and Resources Risk Register, focusing on key risks and their mitigation strategies. Noting that many of the risks had been discussed in previous items, she highlighted two primary areas of concern that do not align with the corporation's agreed risk appetite as follows:

- **Estates Capacity** -The college is facing challenges due to student growth and the ageing infrastructure of its current buildings. Updates were provided on the exploration of options to address these issues. Political challenges surrounding planning permissions were also discussed, with delays attributed to local council concerns and broader political dynamics. The importance of securing planning permission to access grant opportunities was emphasised.
- **Cyber Security:** Despite investments in security measures, the evolving cyber threat landscape continues to pose significant risks.
- The ongoing collaboration with the Audit and Risk Committee to refine risk appetite and tolerance levels, which will be mapped against the risk register and presented in future meetings.
- The finance risk score was lowered due to improved financial forecasts, while the estates risk score remains high.
- Additional risks include difficulties in recruiting skilled staff for specific areas. While some improvements have been made, the college's growth and evolving needs continue to create pressure in this area.

#### **Discussion points**

The distinction between risks that remain within the College's stated risk appetite and those that are currently assessed as outside tolerance, with particular attention given to the effectiveness of mitigating controls.

Cyber security was discussed as a principal ongoing risk considering the evolving threat landscape across the education sector and nationally. Governors noted recent sector intelligence, the nature of cyber threats facing colleges, and the adequacy of current controls, including system resilience, staff awareness training, penetration testing, and incident response planning. Assurance was provided that cyber security risks are subject to continuous monitoring and regular reporting, with mitigating actions reviewed through the Audit and Risk Committee.

Governors discussed the concept of risk tolerance and the importance of articulating not only risk scores but also the level of residual risk the College is prepared to accept in pursuit of strategic objectives. It was agreed that further development of risk tolerance statements would strengthen risk maturity and support more nuanced decision-making at Board level.

Financial risks were reviewed in the context of strong current performance but with recognition of future pressures, including funding volatility, cost inflation, and capital investment requirements. Governors were assured that robust financial controls, scenario planning, and stress testing are in place to mitigate these risks.

Risks relating to estates capacity, workforce sustainability, safeguarding, and compliance were discussed, with Governors noting clear ownership, defined mitigations, and alignment between strategic priorities, and committee oversight. The importance of ensuring that emerging risks, including legislative change and inspection reform, are promptly reflected within the Risk Register was emphasised.

Governors concluded that the Risk Register provides an accurate and dynamic reflection of the College’s risk environment, while agreeing that continued refinement of risk articulation, tolerance, and assurance mapping would further strengthen governance oversight.

**THE CORPORATION NOTED THE RISK REGISTER AND THE MITIGATING ACTIONS BEING TAKEN.**

**88.25 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Following Committee Meeting Minutes were noted

- i. Curriculum & Quality 25 November 2025
- ii. Audit & Risk 27 November 2025
- iii. Finance & Resources 9 December 2025

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING -24 MARCH 2026**

*Staff/student Governors, staff members and observers withdrew from the meeting.*

***Minutes 89.25 -91.25 recorded under Part 2***

The meeting concluded at **19:20**.

<b>These minutes have been approved by the Corporation as a correct record.</b>	
<b>CHAIR:</b>  Paul Butler	<b>DATE:</b>
	<b>REMOTE CONFIRMATION: OR SIGNED:</b>  24 March 2026