

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Corporation

<b>Date:</b>	Monday 15 December 2025	<b>Room number</b>	Via Teams
<b>Present:</b>	Andy Forbes (Chair) Charles Tennant (Vice-Chair) Natalie Davison (Principal/CEO) Akeel Ahmed (AA) Forhad Altafi (Staff Governor) (FA) David Baumslag (DB), Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe (CK) Molly Makota (MM) Sarah Noble (SN) Esther Thompson (ET)		
<b>In attendance:</b>	Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) (CGO) Hiten Savla (Deputy Principal – Finance & Resources) (DPFR) Diana Olafsdottir (Director of HR) (via Teams) (DHR) Tulay Rashid-Grant (Vice-Principal – Curriculum & Partnerships) (VPCP) Carina Ralf (MacIntyre Hudson) (CR) – up to agenda item 7 only. Bharat Rathod (Director of MIS and BI) (BR) – prior to the formal start of the meeting.		
<b>Apologies</b>	Bim Osunsami, Michael Smith (Vice-Principal – Quality & Innovation), Carole Ditty, Nick Kavanagh, Katharina De Vita, Mina Rehman (Student Governor) Bal Panesar, Samuel Nelson (Staff Governor)		

The meeting was preceded by a presentation from the Director of MIS and BI on the Governor Dashboard

*The Director of MIS and BI left the meeting.*

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Bim Osunsami, Michael Smith (Vice-Principal – Quality &amp; Innovation), Carole Ditty, Nick Kavanagh, Katharina De Vita, Mina Rehman (Student Governor), Bal Panesar, Samuel Nelson (Staff Governor).</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the agenda if appropriate.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 20 October 2025 and Notes from the December Strategic Planning Event</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 20 October 2025 and Notes from the December 2025 Strategic Planning Event were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>

**Approved: The Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 20 October 2025 and Notes from the Strategic Planning Event held on 1 December 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record.**

**4. Matters arising - update**

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
C/f	Ofsted debrief to take place with the Director of Student Welfare and Safeguarding Link Governors.	CGO/DSW	New Year	TBA
C/f	NK to meet with the Principal/CEO and CGO to discuss the Link Governor role for Health & Safety.	CGO	ASAP – initial meeting had to be re-arranged	Scheduled for November 2025 –Deferred to New Year

**5. Chair's Actions**

There were no Chair's actions to report.

**6. Financial Statement Auditors Management Report**

CR recorded her thanks to the DPFRR, Head of Finance and the Team for their work on the audit and presented headlines from the report:

- Dates for next year need to be considered to ensure a smoother process
- Already presented to joint P&R and Audit & Risk Committee
- Audit report and regularity report unqualified
- Reviewed budgets and forecasts for next 12 months and going concern assessment
- Cash position expected to be lower by July 2026 but still above minimum requirement, however, encourage careful reporting and monitoring on this
- Going concern work – flexed the assumption and challenged management and currently no concerns to result in a modified report
- LGPS – still in an overall asset position but not enough evidence to recognise the asset therefore a break-even position on the balance sheet
- Letter of representation confirm only non-standard representation is in relation to the pension asset
- Misstatements – balance sheet adjustments that do not have any proper impact
- Disclosure misstatements been adjusted previously
- Disconnect between unit-e and e-fin – manager response has advised that software will be implemented
- Physical identification of fixed assets
- Unadjusted misstatements for some invoices dated 2024
- Audit findings – management responses provided.
- Audit findings – no new audit findings in terms of controls. One issue relating to some matters regarding ILR
- Regularity – no new issues and all points raised last year have been resolved
- Key financial controls – few minor points re payroll procedures that needed to be reviewed; estates strategy to be reviewed, invoices that should have been posted in 2024/25
- Historical issues that have been inherited
- Fixed assets prior year – asset no longer in use and one asset should have been capitalised; unit E and E-fin; ensuring all employees have signed their contracts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Six points in prior year in relation to key financial controls all now resolved</li> <li>- Broadway – raised an advisory point as made a loss and a net liability position. College should review financial support and consider future plans. Charity Commission guidelines also need to be considered in terms of breach of trust.</li> <li>- Broadway accounts must be submitted at the same time as the College – the accounts are being finalised – £145K of the income was not valid and some related to the prior year resulting in materiality being very small and highlighting the prior year adjustment. Going concern is likely to be an emphasis of matter – awaiting permission from the DfE re redundancy/pension strain and these costs may need to be included.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked CR for the report advising that it was very clear that, at the appropriate time, Broadway would need to be wound up but there was still an issue re grounds for reclaiming money for loss of earnings.</p> <p>CR stated that further work was needed to ensure the Broadway accounts stood up to scrutiny but the College accounts could be approved and signed as appropriate as these had been separated as much as possible.</p> <p><b>Agreed: that the Financial Statement Auditors Management Report be received.</b></p> <p><i>CR left the meeting.</i></p>
7.	<p><b>Minutes from the Joint Meeting between the Audit &amp; Risk Committee/P&amp;R Committee Annual Report of the Audit Committee to the Corporation 2024/25/P&amp;R Recommendation</b></p> <p>The CGO advised that the Minutes were presented for information only to inform the Board on discussions that had previously taken place on the Financial Statements. It was usual practice for the joint meeting to be able to recommend the Financial Statements to the Board for approval, however, as further work was required after the meeting, a recommendation could not be made.</p> <p>The Board were referred to the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2024/2025 and were advised that the report brought together the internal and external audit findings and could be replied upon when considering the financial statements for approval.</p> <p><b>Agreed: that the position be noted and the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2024/25 be received.</b></p>
8.	<p><b>Draft Financial Statements and Management Letter y/e 31 July 2025</b></p> <p>The DPFR highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial statements now agreed with the External Auditors</li> <li>- Operating deficit advised before FRS102 adjustment – improvement on the management report at period 12</li> <li>- EBITDA 4.4 for the group – 4.7 for the College</li> <li>- Cashflow – net cash position positive compared to a loss last year</li> <li>- Position improved from previous year</li> <li>- EV workshop funded in year</li> <li>- No breach of covenants</li> </ul> <p>The Chair stated that lagged funding would be an issue for the following year and work was required to reduce operational costs particularly in terms of management costs.</p> <p><b>Approved: the Financial Statements and Management letter 2024/25 were approved.</b></p>

<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Decarbonisation Project and Fixed Asset Sale</b></p> <p>The DPFR advised that the report provided clear guidance around the current position with the decarbonisation project and explained the key reasons to withdraw, specifically that costs were likely to increase and the College did not have the ability to make additional payments.</p> <p>The Chair stated that the position was frustrating but the model was not attractive and the College would need to find other ways to pursue decarbonisation objectives.</p> <p>The DPFR reported that the College had sold the electro microscope (part of the IoT funding) for £80K + VAT which had resulted in a slight profit. Discussion took place on where the microscope had been sold and the uses for this.</p> <p><b>Approved: the Board approved the withdrawal from the decarbonisation project.</b></p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Remuneration Committee Update including Annual Statement/Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The CGO advised that the Remuneration Committee Minutes had been issued separately to all Governors eligible to receive them. The CGO highlighted that discussions at the meetings had focussed on the performance review for senior postholders for 2024/25 and targets for 2052/26.</p> <p>The Board were referred to the Terms of Reference that were recommended for approval and the Annual Statement of Senior Postholder Remuneration. The CGO advised that the median figure for 2024/25 would be adjusted slightly to reflect the final figure in the financial statements. The Chair added that the median figure had remained consistent.</p> <p><b>Approved: the Corporation ratified the approval of the Senior Postholder targets for 2025/26; the Committee Terms of Reference and the Annual Statement of Senior Postholder Remuneration subject to the amendment to the median calculation.</b></p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>College Self-Assessment Report 2024/25</b></p> <p>The VPCP updated the Board on the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 31 self-assessment reviews undertaken</li> <li>- Validation panels including external Ofsted inspector and governors</li> <li>- Individual grades</li> <li>- 5 areas graded Outstanding – High needs, Access, Engineering, Finance and Accounts and IT</li> <li>- 17 areas graded Good</li> <li>- 9 areas graded as Requires Improvement (RI) – process had been tightened to ensure focus on areas for improvement</li> <li>- Standardisation taken place to compare different grades to ensure fairness across the Board</li> <li>- Final validation – self assessed as a Grade 2 overall</li> <li>- Grade 2 for Quality of Education, Behaviour and Standards, Personal Development and Leadership and Management</li> <li>- Apprenticeships remained at RI</li> <li>- Quality of teaching and learning had improved, achievement continued to rise in 16-18, improved work experience, improved stakeholder engagement, however, still further work to do to improve English and Maths especially the high grades.</li> <li>- Value added was a concern in a few areas, apprenticeship outcomes, internal progression and attendance needed focus as well as increasing the QAR up to 85% for 16-18</li> </ul> <p>The Vice-Chair stated that there was good detail on why areas were good and why areas were RI which was an improvement in terms of level of information and understanding. There was a need to focus on the route and timeframe for Apprenticeships which had been RI for some time.</p>

	<p>The Chair noted that it was positive to have five outstanding areas and recorded his congratulations to all of the managers responsible for these areas. The SAR was now clearer, easier to understand and showing a distinct improvement.</p> <p>The Chair questioned when the SAR would be moved to the new framework. The VPCP replied that this would take place for 2025/26 to ensure sufficient times to address any initial. The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was the first action and the template would be reviewed alongside a new self-assessment form to address the toolbox requirements.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there would be any new areas that my cause concern. The VPCP responded that the new framework would be a lot more data orientated. There will not be deep dives as previous but all data would be considered and this could then be followed up in any specific area. There would also be a report card instead of a final grade.</p> <p>DB stated that the SAR was a rigorous assessment and asked which of the RI areas needed a little effort to get to Good and which were further away. The VPCP advised that Apprenticeships and English and Maths were the two areas that required the most work particularly re high grades. This year the College was increasing focus on value added at Grade 3 in English and Maths to achieve Grade 4 through streaming. In terms of Apprenticeship looking, there was a need to bring the systems and practices in line with the rest of the College and ensure they used the same tracking and monitoring.</p> <p>The Chair stated that it was rare for traditional core areas such as Hair and Beauty and Electrical and Plumbing not to be performing well and this was a concern. It was noted that this would be discussed further at the Curriculum &amp; Quality Committee</p> <p>The Chair thanked the VPCP for the update and recorded his thanks to the VPQI for his work on the SAR.</p> <p><b>Approved: the College Self-Assessment Report 2024/25 was approved.</b></p>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>KPI Dashboard 2025/26</b></p> <p>The Principal/CEO provided a review of performance data across the College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key issue for Governors highlighted as under recruitment for 16-18 which would have a significant impact on next years funding. The reduction would be partially offset by the increase in funding rate notified in the White Paper (3% increase 16-18).</li> <li>- Measures being taken to reduce staffing costs eg VR scheme and restructures</li> <li>- Strategic priority 1 – great work led by HR around reduction in time taken to recruit staff (36 days to offer); staff vacancy rate was still low c4.3%</li> <li>- Strategic priority 3 – positive work on TLA for this year from learning walks – greater proportion of staff were achieving a higher level of performance – testament to the hard work of the Quality team, coaches and the staff themselves</li> <li>- Strategic priority 4 – significant reduction in positive destination data – reduced to 87.3% due to some weak internal progression</li> <li>- Strategic priority 5- staffing cost ratio at 71.6% against the target of 65%</li> <li>- SECR report – there had been an increase in the College’s carbon footprint. The College was focussing on the first two elements and not focussing on travel of staff and students. Cross college efforts on sustainability would be relaunched in the New Year in line with the climate action roadmap.</li> </ul> <p>The DPFR reported that the majority of colleges were not currently achieving the 65% target for staffing costs and 70% of Colleges were at 75% or over.</p>

	<p>DB referred to the high GCSE performance impacting on recruitment and asked whether the average capability of the cohort was therefore lower and whether this would impact on performance. The Principal/CEO replied that the issue was not hugely problematic as the College had rigorous systems to monitor progress and ensure the right interventions were in place including engaging with parents. The issue was the students achieving grades to be able to remain at Sixth Forms and undertake A-levels.</p> <p>AA referred to the strategic priorities, noting that priority four which was more data focussed, included more red areas and asked whether that was indicative that the new framework would place the College less favourably. The Principal/CEO responded that the College had been making significant strides in performance data but it was imperative that apprenticeships were improved and there was evidence that there would be improvements this year. The new framework placed a strong emphasis on performance gaps, SEND needs and inclusion and disadvantage data, therefore the College needed to be more sophisticated at a granular level for data and also focus on level three value added.</p> <p>AA stated that new KPI's would need to be considered to reflect the QIP actions against the new toolkit, however, there was a lot of time until the next inspection which should place the College strongly. The Principal/CEO added that the framework guidelines specified four years between inspections unless there were any major changes within the College.</p> <p>The Chair questioned whether the Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) situation in Barking was of concern. The Principal/CEO advised that there had been a period where NEET levels were under control but this had declined. Weak internal progression could contribute to the NEET position therefore the reengagement programme was important with new cohorts starting in January and growing in capacity. The College did not have a good solution for students on the wrong pathway and January starts were a difficult area of curriculum to get right – the College needed to refine and diversify the January offer to strengthen it going forward. CK added that the NEET position in the borough was improving. The Principal/CEO stated that the College had a good relationship with LBBD and the follow through with data was excellent.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Principal/CEO for the report which focused on the issues that needed attention in a good reporting format.</p> <p><b>Agreed: that the current update be received.</b></p>
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Principal/CEO Update – College News and Developments</b>  The Principal/CEO highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WorldSkills UK Finals - student winning Gold in Additive Manufacturing</li> <li>- Links with employers in learning experiences – industry insights</li> <li>- Eastbrook studios</li> <li>- Community engagement/corporate social responsibility – MIND Christmas event, public services students raising £10K</li> </ul> <p>The Chair stated that the College had been mentioned in the national world skills report as being the platform for London Colleges.</p> <p><b>Agreed: that the update be received.</b></p>
<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p><b>Curriculum &amp; Quality Update</b>  The Chair of the Curriculum &amp; Quality Committee, updated the Board on the key elements from the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair</li> <li>- Recommendation of Terms of Refence for approval</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update on recruitment and challenges re conversion rates and progression</li> <li>- Focus on looking at at-risk areas and areas of good practice – three areas at risk: Hair &amp; Beauty, Plumbing and Motor Vehicle - deep dives undertaken into these issues</li> <li>- Business, Engineering and Construction were areas of good practice. Discussions on these areas allowed the Committee to now be able to answer questions on strengths – providing clarity on the positives</li> <li>- Use of the learning from deep dives to outline and articulate common themes of good practice that can be translated over into other areas</li> <li>- Improvements in the way the data was presented – feedback well received and considered</li> <li>- Good progress to understanding strengths and weaknesses at a deeper level and identifying common themes</li> </ul> <p>The Chair noted the very encouraging progress made by the Committee.</p> <p><b>Approved: the Curriculum &amp; Quality Committee Terms of Reference 2025/26 were approved.</b></p>
<p><b>15.</b></p>	<p><b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee Update</b></p> <p>The Vice-Chair of the Policy &amp; Resources Committee highlighted the Committee’s discussion on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair</li> <li>- Recommendation of approval of Terms of Reference and ratification of approval of Financial Regulations</li> <li>- Strategic risks</li> <li>- Risk register updated with AI risk, financial health risk reduced, financial control and TLA and industrial relations risks increased</li> <li>- Discussion re AI risk and opportunities</li> <li>- EDI update – risk identified re council elections</li> <li>- Financial policies approved</li> <li>- Management accounts</li> <li>- Decarbonisation project</li> <li>- Detailed discussion re banking covenant</li> <li>- Capital projects – EV workshop completed, nine new classrooms added to the College, exit from Barking Learning Centre</li> <li>- Health and Safety – RIDDOR cases reduced, future reports to consider trends</li> <li>- Subcontracting</li> </ul> <p>Thanks were recorded to all of the Committee for their contributions and to the Executive and relevant teams for the reporting.</p> <p><b>Approved: the Policy &amp; Resources Committee Terms of Reference 2025/26 and Financial Regulations were approved.</b></p>
<p><b>16.</b></p>	<p><b>Management Accounts – October 2025</b></p> <p>The DPFR updated the Board as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The position was ahead of what was projected as a forecast future</li> <li>- Reviewing impact of the VR process</li> <li>- ESOL 16-18 staff utilisation being considered</li> <li>- Need to work hard this year to reduce the costs</li> <li>- Overall position – updated cash flow forecast allowing the position to move from where anticipated to be at the end of this year given the lagged funding</li> </ul> <p>DB suggested that it would be useful to bring together the contribution analysis against the curriculum self-assessment to understand the position on efficiency re curriculum and contribution. This would be considered.</p>

	<b>Agreed: that the current position be noted.</b>
<b>17.</b>	<p><b>Review of Code of Governance</b></p> <p>The CGO presented the annual review against compliance against the Code of Governance, highlighting that although the Board was compliant, actions had been included as there was always the opportunity to improve.</p> <p><b>Approved: the Board approved the review of the Code of Governance, confirming compliance for 2024/25.</b></p>
<b>18.</b>	<p><b>Governor Self-assessment</b></p> <p>The CGO presented the Governance SMART target action plan for 2025/26 advising that the actions were included from the self-assessment process, meeting self-assessment, appraisal process, code of governance review and the external board review. The CGO highlighted the outstanding action for the Board portal that would be completed by the end of January 2026.</p> <p><b>Approved: the self-assessment review for 2024/25 and SMART target action plan for 2025/26 was approved.</b></p>
<b>19.</b>	<p><b>Audit &amp; Risk Committee Update including Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25</b></p> <p>The DPFR highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internal audit reports – reasonable assurance</li> <li>- ESR – advisory audit – lot of work taking place in College</li> <li>- Internal audit annual report</li> <li>- Terms of Reference</li> <li>- Fraud update</li> <li>- ONS update</li> <li>- Subcontracting controls assurance – no recommendations</li> <li>- Whistleblowing – incident discussed</li> </ul> <p>The DPFR reported that the GLA report had advised that the College was not following the subcontracting requirements. This was being challenged by the College and Governors would be updated as soon as possible.</p> <p><b>Agreed: that the current update be received.</b></p>
<b>20.</b>	<p><b>Risk Register</b></p> <p>The DPFR informed the Board of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key areas where risk had increased</li> <li>- Sustaining high quality TLA had increased in risk but will be updated as the SAR process was now completed,</li> <li>- Fraud and financial control risk increased due to overcharge from some suppliers; industrial relations risk increased due to potential of strike action (BDC currently not involved)</li> <li>- Two areas decreased in risk - failure to meet planned budget and planned financial health</li> <li>- New AI risk – to be monitored and updated</li> <li>- Risks and further mitigations to be considered going forward</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked the DPFR for the update.</p> <p><b>Agreed: that the update be received.</b></p>
<b>21.</b>	<p><b>AoB</b></p> <p>There was no further business.</p>

	<i>The Staff Members and Staff Governor, other than the DHR/Principal/CEO and CGO, left the meeting.</i> A confidential discussion took place concerning the AI platform developments.
<b>22.</b>	<b>Self-assessment – to be issued after the meeting.</b>
<b>23.</b>	<b>Date and time of next meeting – Monday 23 March 2025, 5pm</b>

The Chair thanked all in attendance for their contributions. The meeting closed at 7.05pm.

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Update</b>
C/f	Ofsted debrief to take place with the Director of Student Welfare and Safeguarding Link Governors.	CGO/DSW	New Year	TBA