

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Corporation

Date:	Monday 6 July 2026	Room number	Via Teams
Present:	Andy Forbes (Chair) Natalie Davison (Principal/CEO) Akeel Ahmed (AA) Carole Ditty (CD) Sarah Hawkins (SH) Molly Makota (MM) Bal Panesar (BP) Esther Thompson (ET)		
In attendance:	Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) (CGO) Garry Westwater (Interim Deputy Principal – Finance & Resources) (IDPFR) Tulay Rashid-Grant (Vice-Principal – Curriculum & Partnerships) (VPCP) Anthony Brathwaite (Director of Student Welfare & Support) – (AB) – agenda item 6 only Anthony McGarel (Incoming Deputy Principal – Finance & Resources) – Observer Forhad Altafi - Invited to join the meeting as an observer Rain McManus (new Business Support Staff Governor) - Observer		
Apologies	Bim Osunsami, Sarah Noble, Nick Kavanagh, Samuel Nelson (Staff Governor) Diana Olafsdottir (Director of HR), Mina Rehman (Student Governor), James Platt, David Baumslag, Katharina De Vita, Dr Kangethe, Charles Tennant (Vice-Chair)		

1.	Welcome and apologies for absence The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and Rain McManus was welcomed as an observer. Apologies for absence were received from Bim Osunsami, Sarah Noble, Nick Kavanagh, Samuel Nelson (Staff Governor) Diana Olafsdottir (Director of HR), Mina Rehman (Student Governor), James Platt, David Baumslag, Katharina De Vita, Dr Kangethe, Charles Tennant (Vice-Chair)
2.	Declarations of Interest Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the agenda if appropriate. The CGO noted that Anthony McGarel was in attendance as an observer prior to starting his role in July.
3.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 23 March 2026 and Notes from the April Strategy Event. The Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 23 March 2026 and Notes from the April Strategy Event were agreed as a true and accurate record.

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4.	Matters arising - update <table><tr><th>Agenda Item</th><th>Action</th><th>Responsibility</th><th>Timescale</th><th>Update</th></tr><tr><td>C/f</td><td>Ofsted debrief to take place with the Director of Student Welfare and Safeguarding Link Governors.</td><td>CGO/DSW</td><td>New Year</td><td>Complete</td></tr><tr><td>6.</td><td>Board to receive a briefing on the details of how World Skills works.</td><td>VPCP</td><td>ASAP</td><td>Complete</td></tr><tr><td>9.</td><td>Trends on outcomes of complaints to be added to future reports.</td><td>Head of Quality</td><td>Next report (2026/27)</td><td></td></tr></table>					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	Complete	6.	Board to receive a briefing on the details of how World Skills works.	VPCP	ASAP	Complete	9.	Trends on outcomes of complaints to be added to future reports.	Head of Quality	Next report (2026/27)	
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5.	Chair's Actions <p>The Chair reported that he had provided an authorisation letter for the Construction Technical Excellence Colleges (CTEC) bid for c£800K to support the construction facilities and resources in line with the CTEC. The College was awaiting a response.</p> <p>Approved: Chair's actions were approved.</p> <p><i>Anthony Brathwaite, Director of Student Welfare & Support (AB) joined the meeting.</i></p>																								
6.	<p>Safeguarding Update</p> <p>AB highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The safeguarding journey- Focus for 2026/27 - drilling down into the data- Strengthened the team- Exploring EDI data to consider trends <p>CD reported that resourcing challenges had previously been discussed through the Safeguarding Link Governor meeting and asked whether this issued had been resolved or if there remained additional need, noting that out of 387 incidents, 201 had been allocated as unsigned. AB replied that the CPOMS system was being widely used across the College for behaviour to keep on top of incidents but these sometimes needed to be filtered. The team triaged cases and there was a rota in place for this but the frequency of meetings could be improved. CD advised that she would also be in favour of termly Governor CPOMS meetings. This was agreed.</p> <p>CD referred to the breakdown of cases by curriculum area and the increase in cases in areas such as Sports, Performing Arts, Protective Services and Horizons. AB advised that Horizons had recently appointed a safeguarding officer to their team due to the volume of cases. The increased in other areas could be due to an increase in reporting but this needed to be considered across college.</p> <p>In response to a query from the Chair, AB confirmed that the triage rota should address staff using the CPOMS system for cases that did not meet the threshold for safeguarding.</p>																								

	<p>AA asked for clarity on the approach for addressing the gap between what was being reported, anticipated incidents and proportionality of incidents in the Borough and whether this would be captured in the QIP. AB replied that this could be noted as an action for the QIP. There was extra emphasis on compliance for next academic year and more emphasis on staff reporting. Focus on early intervention would inform which learners were targeted by the Support and Achievement Mentors (SAMS). The culture of safeguarding needed to be the focus for 2026//27.</p> <p>The Chair stated that good progress had been made and the improvement and refinements now required were understood. Thanks were recorded to AB and the team.</p> <p>Action: Termly Governor CPOMS meetings to be in place for 2026/27. Measuring of safeguarding incidents being reported against anticipated incident and proportionality of incidents in the Borough to be included as an action for the QIP.</p>
7.	<p>EDI Annual Report 2025-26</p> <p>The CGO presented the report advising that this was a draft version and the final version would be presented to the Board in October 2026. Further data to comply with the Equality Act was required in the report alongside good news stories.</p> <p>The Chair stated that the Board could be satisfied that EDI was moving in the right direction and thanked the CGO for the report.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current position be noted.</p>
8.	<p>Annual Accountability Agreement</p> <p>The VPCP informed the Board of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accountability statement was being submitted for approval – to be submitted to the DfE by 31 July 2026 - Supported Local Needs Duty - Explained how the College was responding to the needs of Barking & Dagenham, East London and Local Sub Regions - Aligned to curriculum and skills plan and the transition statement - Progression entry to level 3 and apprenticeships; aligning curriculum development; strengthening employer engagement; progression for ESOL learners - 2025/26 looked back at last years statement to consider performance as well as looking at the new draft LSIP - Government reforms and post-16 reform - More or less met the objectives – strongest performance was work placements, workforce stability, 16-19 target – partially met as the data re market share was not accurate therefore the target was not realistic, however, the College also did not meet recruitment targets <p>CD stated that this was a comprehensive document and a useful tool providing a deep understanding of the direction travel and use of the illustrative case studies added a richness to the document. 90% of Level 3 science learners progressing to university was a great achievement.</p> <p>The Chair echoed the above adding that this was a good statement that showed the College was making a good impact overall. The Annual Accountability Agreement was approved.</p> <p>Approved: the Annual Accountability Agreement was approved by the Board.</p>
9.	<p>Curriculum and Skills Plan 2026/27</p> <p>The VPCP highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The business planning process has commenced earlier than previous years - Focus on apprenticeships, local skills needs, AI, sustainability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning growth in terms of 16-18 to rebalance deficit from previous year - Issues with growth in some areas re staffing, resources, quality eg counselling - Adult learning was a planned growth but trying not to rely too much on ESOL and Adult Essential Skills - English and Maths <p>The Chair queried where there were constraints on growth whether this was typically to do with staffing and space. TRG replied that trying to locate the right level of staff was providing limitations.</p> <p>BP asked for clarity on the perception of the planned reductions in IT. The VPCP responded that there would be an ESOL IT programme which would mitigate the reduction as this was a re-balance of the area rather than a reduction. The Chair added that the qualifications that would get learners into industry had to be considered and therefore this was a moving picture.</p> <p>The Chair noted that it was pleasing that business planning had been brought forward and the College had a realistic ambitious plan. After further discussion the plan was approved.</p> <p>Approved: the Curriculum and Skills Plan 2026/27 was approved.</p>
10.	<p>Tuition Fees Policy 2026/27</p> <p>The IDPFR presented the policy for approval noting the list of amendments from 2025-26 in line with sector guidelines and the revised fee table. The Board were advised that as there had been an increase in free provision, less fees were being charged.</p> <p>CD referred to the changes regarding the first exam and resit being free before learners were subsequently charged and asked if there was any flexibility for extenuating circumstances. The IDPFR confirmed that there would be discretion on this.</p> <p>Approved: the Tuition Fees Policy 2026/27 was approved.</p>
11.	<p>Policy & Resources Committee Update including Supply Chain Fee Policy</p> <p>CD, Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee, highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Committee had approved the 2026/27 Supply Chain Fee Policy which had no material amendments from the previous version. The Board were asked to ratify this approval. - Encouraging and reassuring subcontracting update and confirmation of the external audit validation - KPI Dashboard – strong HR metrics and pleasing to see the progress made in terms of sickness absence and a trend of 35-40% decrease; focussed efforts on training; reviewed approach on probationary periods - Staff survey was now imminent <p>The Chair stated that work had taken place to rebuild the HR function and it was pleasing to see the progress made. The Chair thanked CD for the update and the Board ratified approval of the Supply Chain Fees Policy.</p> <p>Approved: the Supply Chain Fees Policy 2026/27 was approved.</p>
12.	<p>Subcontracting Plan 2026/27</p> <p>The IDPFR reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced subcontracting – intention to undertake more in house and use the subcontracting partner as a buffer - Partner had reduced the threshold to 20% - Cut in GLA adult funding

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an increase in subcontracting was needed, the College had responsive partners in terms of delivery and quality <p>Approved: the Subcontracting Plan 2026/27 was approved.</p>
13.	<p>Draft Annual Budget and Three-Year Forecast including Capital Update 2026/27</p> <p>The IDPFR provided a detailed update on the budget including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DfE announcement re additional funding - The College had set a reasonable prudent, achievable budget - The College must produce budget for next year and forecast for following year - Operating surplus 2026/27 and improved surplus for 2027/28 – setting a higher bar for young people in 2026/27 - Improving cash position - Improvement in EBITDA and financial health - Top down and bottom-up approach - Pay increase - allowed for 2% for the entire year prior to the DfE announcement of the part funding of the pay award - TPS – college in receipt of a grant for the employers' contribution - Sensitivity analysis around the income lines – post 16-18 uplift, real term cash cut for adults - Detailed capital expenditure plan - Appendix 1 - Front loaded the DfE grants but have to March 2028 to spend one grant and March 2029 to spend the second - Developing an estates strategy and rolling three-year IT strategy and plan <p>The IDPFR explained that the pay award was originally 2% for all staff but this had not included the recent DfE announcement and further details were expected later in July which would need to be reflected in the first quarter going forward. There was an expectation that the College would need to find the first 1.5% for a 3.5% pay rise which may not affect the bottom line.</p> <p>AA questioned whether the budget was in sync with the curriculum planning process as the Adult Skills Funding was decreasing yet the curriculum plan was growing in that area. The IDPFR explained that the College would not put growth funding into the budget to be prudent. The VPCP added that the reduction in subcontracting provided flexibility to grow.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Board to consider approval of the budget noting that what was approved today had to be reflected in the CFFR but a reforecast of budget after the first quarter would be needed to consider the adjustments. After further discussion the Board approved the budget presented noting that a further meeting would be convened when clarity had been received from the DfE to consider required adjustments.</p> <p>.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the IDPFR for his hard work in presenting a clear budget.</p> <p>Approved: The Board approved the budget and three year forecast. A further meeting would be convened when clarity had been received from the DfE to consider required adjustments and a reforecast as appropriate.</p>
14.	<p>Curriculum & Quality Update</p> <p>AA, Vice-Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee provided the following update from the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion around KPI dashboard – strategic priorities, satisfaction for mid-year survey 87%; learning walks with a focus on punctuality and attendance - Good progress made on work placements - Achievement -expecting to meet target for 16-18. Slightly short for 19+ - Apprenticeship achievement was slow and financial performance under strategic review

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusivity – new criteria from the Ofsted toolkit – sixth area of focus within the quality improvement action plan - Destination data and information - Overview of curriculum and quality performance - retention improved slightly - L1 and 2 attendance impacted by English and Maths (E&M) - HE update – predicted QAR at 92.3% with 19 results still awaited - Strategic risk register – point 11 <p>The Chair advised that the Curriculum & Quality Committee had also made a commitment to have a particular focus on apprenticeships and a meeting would be scheduled at the beginning of the academic year.</p> <p>The Chair thanked AA for a detailed update.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current position be noted.</p>
15.	<p>Transition Statement</p> <p>The VPCP highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statement to address curriculum reforms - Government and DFE wanted to transform post-16 education; reviewing all L2 and level 3 - Two major pathways at Level 2 – occupational route and a foundational route - Occupational route – 2 years then work or T-level, apprenticeships - Foundation level -1 year and into A-levels, V-levels or T-levels - Both routes for level 2 incorporate E&M - All existing qualifications for BTECS would not exist beyond 2028/29 - College had limited choices as the bulk of the offer was BTECS - T-levels were changing - If a learner wanted to undertake one main subject then they need to take a T-level (2 years equivalent to A-levels); if they were unsure then their pathway was A-levels, V-levels or apprenticeships - No rules of combination but learners were unable to take three V-levels from different categories and also could not undertake A-levels within the same category - College must spend next year preparing - Foundation and occupational at level 2 – some subjects may fit into both – could be limiting learners who did not know what they wanted to do - Need to continually consider this - Need to consider running A-levels alongside V-levels to be able to provide a meaningful offer to learners - All the V-levels would be designed by AI <p>The Chair stated that, in a borough where almost every school had a sixth form, providers were not in a situation where anyone could offer a mix of A-levels and V-levels.</p> <p>CD questioned the possibility of working in collaboration with local sixth form colleges. The VPCP replied that this was an option and the College needed to reach out and speak to the sixth forms but the timeline was an issue and the schools would want to retain their students.</p> <p>AA advised that decisions would need to be dependent on learner profile and also what local employers wanted and needed. It made sense for the College to do what it was good at and occupy the current niche. If relationships with sixth forms were enriching then the College could move forward.</p> <p>The Principal/CEO advised that the concern was that the College was in danger of losing its unique selling point. The College was distinctive and offered a different pathway, however, all providers could be in the position of offering the same things.</p>

	<p>The Chair suggested that working group or subcommittee be created at the beginning of the academic year to be able to track and monitor actions and responses. This was agreed.</p> <p>The Principal/CEO recorded her thanks to TRG for her work on the accountability agreement, curriculum plan and the transition statement.</p> <p>Agreed: that the Transition statement be agreed.</p> <p>Action: Transition Working Group/Sub-Committee to be put in place for 2026/27</p>
16.	<p>Student Voice – Annual Summary</p> <p>The Principal/CEO highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student feedback from student voice forums and end of year satisfaction survey - Student forums – over 20 meetings with students – two cycles; Governors often participated - Positive feedback about teachers – increased positive feedback re English and Maths - Students often felt they were making good progress – 96% - Good feedback from student support – each student had a key worker - EDI positive feedback - Key issue was the state of the toilets, often the result of vandalism - IT issues/strength of wi-fi identified as an issue, more investment needed - End of year survey undertaken externally by QDP allowing the responses to be benchmarked against 87 other colleges - Overall satisfaction at 89% needed to be improved – the question to relate to the College not the course needed to be considered - Food studies feedback partially influenced by the fact students expected the College to pay for their ingredients - Beauty therapy complaints regarding equipment - being updated - Feedback on the creative side was very mixed for the team to focus on - Nearly all aspects scoring over 90%; College aspire to be quartile A (top 25% of colleges) - Top quartiles for course management, positive for test and assessments <p>AA stated that the response rate of 54.02% was excellent and recorded his congratulations to all involved. The Chair thanked the Principal/CEO for leading on this.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current position be noted.</p>
17.	<p>Management Accounts</p> <p>The IDPFR advised that the detail of the management accounts had been discussed in the budget agenda item. The Board had no further questions.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
18.	<p>Broadway Theatre Update</p> <p>The Principal/CEO reported that this would be the final year for the Theatre and due to the cost of the Directors salary and redundancy there would be a deficit. The Council had announced that they had a new occupier but this would be a gradual process.</p> <p>Agreed: that the position be noted.</p>
19.	<p>GDPR Update</p> <p>The CGO provided an update on the GDPR requests received during the 2025/26 academic year, highlighting the record regarding data breaches. The plan for 2026/27 including a full data audit, shredding amnesty and revised internal audit was noted.</p> <p>-</p>

	Agreed: that the current position be noted.
20.	Health & Safety (H&S) Update The Principal/CEO reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New team in place with two managers reporting into the Head of HR - Good progress on policies and procedures - More rigorous educational visits risk assessments and medical disclosures - Risk assessments improved for employers and apprenticeships - High compliance for mandatory training - Focussing on moving away from the tick box culture - H&S Committee taking place Agreed: that the update be noted.
21.	Audit & Risk Committee Update including External Audit Planning Memorandum 2025/26 and Internal Audit Services 2026/27 BP, Vice-Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, highlighted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal audit reports - Approve planning memorandum - Small recommendations for internal audit process for payroll <p>The Board considered the External Audit Planning Memorandum 2025/26 and approval was ratified.</p> Approved: the External Audit Planning Memorandum 2025/26 was approved.
22.	Risk Register The IDPFR advised that minor amendments had been made to the risk register and this would be handed over to the new DPFR to revise. <p>BP stated that he had made an observation at the Audit & Risk Committee regarding the weighting associated with AI risks going forward.</p> Agreed: that the update be received.
23.	Board of Corporation and Committee Meeting Schedule 2026/27 There were no suggested amendments to the proposed meetings schedule and the CGO advised that calendar invitations would now be issued. <p>Approved: the Board of Corporation and Committee Meeting Schedule 2026/27 was approved.</p>
24.	Governance Update The CGO presented the report highlighting the new Student Governors who would be joining the Board from September, progress against the Corporation SMART targets for 2025/26 and the proposed FE Futures Programme. <p>After discussion, the Board approved the FE Futures Programme and, as part of the programme, the appointment of a co-opted Governor to the Curriculum & Quality Committee as recommended by the Search & Governance Committee.</p> Approved: The FE Futures Programme strategy and appointment of the co-opted Governor to the Curriculum & Quality Committee were approved.

25.	AoB There was no further business. The Chair advised that this was the last meeting for Katharina De Vita and Forhad Latafi – both were thanked for their commitment to the Corporation. Forhad thanked the Board for the opportunity.
26.	Self-assessment – to be issued after the meeting.
27.	Date and time of next meeting – Monday 19 October 2026

The Chair thanked all in attendance for their contributions. A lot of progress had been made and the challenge and time from Governors had been appreciated. The meeting closed at 18.57pm.

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
C/f	Trends on outcomes of complaints to be added to future reports.	Head of Quality	Next report (2026/27)	9.
6.	Termly Governor CPOMS meetings to be in place for 2026/27.	Director of Student Welfare & Support	September 2026	
6.	Measuring of safeguarding incidents being reported against anticipated incident and proportionality of incidents in the Borough to be included as an action for the QIP.	Director of Student Welfare & Support	ASAP	
15.	Transition Working Group/Sub-Committee to be put in place for 2026/27	VPCP/CGO	September 2026	