

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Corporation

Date:	Monday 23 March 2026	Room number	Boardroom
Present:	Andy Forbes (Chair) Charles Tennant (Vice-Chair) Natalie Davison (Principal/CEO) Carole Ditty (CD) Samuel Nelson (Staff Governor) (SNe) Sarah Noble (SNo) Esther Thompson (ET)		
Present via Teams:	Forhad Altafi (Staff Governor) (FA) David Baumslag (DB) Katharina De Vita (KDV) Bal Panesar (BP)		
In attendance:	Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) (CGO) Garry Westwater (Interim Deputy Principal – Finance & Resources) (IDPFR) Diana Olafsdottir (Director of HR) (via Teams) (DHR) Tulay Rashid-Grant (Vice-Principal – Curriculum & Partnerships) (VPCP) JISC Team (Mark Tysom, Graeme McDowall, Iain Brown, Henry Hughes) – (prior to commencement of the formal meeting only)		
Apologies	Bim Osunsami, Nick Kavanagh, Mina Rehman (Student Governor), James Platt, Sarah Hawkins, Akeel Ahmed, Cllr Kangethe.		

The meeting was preceded by a presentation from JISC on Cyber Security for Governance. Key highlights included:

- Security briefing
- Background
- Evolving Educational Threat Landscape
- Government Response
- Evolving Regulatory Landscape
- The Board's Role
- Board Toolkit to Cyber Resilience
- Working with Sector Bodies
- Practical Takeaways for Boards

It was noted that an internal audit for cyber security was undertaken on an annual basis. Next steps were identified as further training for the Board and PEN testing to be initiated.

The Chair thanked the JISC team for their presentation.

JISC left the meeting.

1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and Garry Westwater was welcomed to his first meeting of the Corporation. Apologies for absence were received from Bim Osunsami, Nick</p>
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	Kavanagh, Mina Rehman (Student Governor), James Platt, Sarah Hawkins, Akeel Ahmed, Cllr Kangethe.														
2.	Declarations of Interest Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the agenda if appropriate.														
3.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 15 December 2025. The Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 15 December 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record. Approved: The Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Corporation – 15 December 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record.														
4.	Matters arising - update														
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Agenda Item</th> <th>Action</th> <th>Responsibility</th> <th>Timescale</th> <th>Update</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <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>TBA</td> </tr> </tbody> </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	TBA
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C/f	Ofsted debrief to take place with the Director of Student Welfare and Safeguarding Link Governors.	CGO/DSW	New Year	TBA											
	The CGO confirmed that approval for the appointment of Sarah Hawkins and James Platt had been sought and received via email. The induction process for both new Governors was taking place.														
5.	Chair's Actions There were no Chair's actions to report.														
6.	Principal/CEO Update – College News and Developments The Principal/CEO stated that the report was an opportunity to talk through contextual developments and provide headlines re events and positive news, industrial relations and leadership changes. The following was highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Royal visit took place in February, success at the skills competitions (College applying for entering at the UK World Skills), crime awareness week focussing on knife crime, drugs etc, breakfast meetings with stakeholders, Creative Show taking place next term. - College had a productive meeting with the JCC – themes included pay, wellbeing and workload and EDI (particularly around local and national politics); three wellbeing days confirmed for staff; - disappointment re the recent funding announcement for the 16-18 funding rate (base rate at 0.55%) and cut to adult funding – impact on pay award - The interviews for the replacement of the Deputy Principal – Finance & Resources scheduled for 17 April 2026 - Changes in leadership due to natural turnover – being reviewed by Exec - Staffing costs remained at 72% <p>The Chair advised that it would be useful for the Board to receive a briefing on the details of how World Skills worked. This was agreed.</p> <p>The Chair referred to changes in leadership and a report on structure and names on college roles, noting that the College had a lot of tiers of different titles and this would be an opportunity to rationalise the position.</p>														

	<p>DB questioned the challenges re the funding rate. The Principal/CEO responded that the College had already undertaken a voluntary redundancy process and work was taking place to review staff costs with the aim to avoid compulsory redundancies. The IDPFR added that he had worked through the toolkit and, in real terms, this was a cut due to inflation and rising heat/energy costs. Further discussions would take place when the allocations had been received. The Chair stated that the College must ensure quality improvement for Teaching, Learning & Assessment (TLA) at the same time as reducing income.</p> <p>Action: Board to receive a briefing on the details of how World Skills works.</p>
7.	<p>Curriculum & Quality Update</p> <p>The Vice-Chair (Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee) presented the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised Quality Improvement Action Plan (QIAP) – outlined five key strategic priorities alongside inclusivity to sit across all priorities - KPI's across curriculum areas and different types of provision - Ofsted readiness – learner journey - At risk areas- deep dive - Good practice areas - Work experience and stakeholder engagement - Going forward – focus on destination data, revised Monitoring and Performance (MAP) meeting process, deep dives to consider areas of weakness eg attendance <p>The VPCP reported that the Heads of English and Maths (E&M) now attended MAP meetings as well as Admissions staff to input re E&M attendance, progression and marketing. The Vice-Chair added that this was a more holistic approach which would ensure increased ownership of actions.</p> <p>The VPCP advised that the learner journeys were finding patterns of evidence eg experience of enrolment, SMART targets etc. Learning walks next term would also focus on lesson starts and attendance.</p> <p>The Chair stated that attendance had been an issue for several years and the College needed to really consider the issues behind this. The VPCP replied that Levels one and two had predominantly lower attendance which had been reduced further by E&M and it was therefore intended to change the timetables for this year.</p> <p>In response to a query from the Chair, it was confirmed that the College was measuring against FE Commissioner (FEC) guidelines for English and Maths and a self-assessment had taken place.</p> <p>SNe advised that E&M had historically been an issue but previously the College had an E&M learning centre where students from across the College, from any course, could receive additional support specific to their needs. The Principal/CEO responded that, at present, all ALS funding was being used for in-class support. SNo highlighted the importance of linking the importance of E&M within vocational areas as it was only when students could see the application of their learning that they understood the connection. The VPCP added that if E&M referred back to subject areas next year, there was a possibility of contextualisation to engage the students more.</p> <p>ET stated that Maths in school was poor as pupils were struggling to understand and the teaching was not clear enough for pupils to achieve.</p> <p>The Chair advised that there was a need to ensure the College did not lose sight of HE/Level 4 and above even though it was not Ofsted aligned. It was agreed this would be discussed at the Curriculum & Quality Committee.</p> <p>Agreed: that the current position be noted.</p>

<p>8.</p>	<p>HR Update – Gender & Ethnicity Pay Gap Report</p> <p>The DHR informed the Board of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voluntarily chosen to add ethnicity to the reporting as this was most likely to follow gender in terms of reporting - Report was based on last year’s data - Key focus of the report was to understand structural barriers to accessing higher paid roles - Employees in scope was not the full head count of staff – anyone not receiving full salary eg long term sick was not included - Pay quartile would like to see correlation between pay quartiles and the median - Higher proportion of women in lower paid roles and lower proportion in higher roles - 10-12% of staff not declared ethnicity – need to encourage self-reporting - Ethnicity- more balanced, however, lowest paid was white workers which may be due to higher representation in lower roles - Considering whether particular ethnicities take up role in specific groups - Lower paid roles clarified as administration, catering, learning support practitioners, admissions - Position re gender similar to previous year - Monitoring taking place, consideration re diverse interview panels, pay scales, unconscious bias training - Three priority commitments to focus on upward mobility in lower quartiles, support internal sponsorship and mentoring, close gaps re data for ethnicity and consider senior leadership proportionate representation <p>The Vice-Chair asked whether, going forward, the College could consider intersexuality eg white females and practices re reverse mentoring where a member of the minority group acts as a mentor to someone from a different minority group etc. The DHR responded that a behavioural sciences group was in place to look at making changes, the intention was to build further layers onto the report to provide a more accurate insight.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the DHR for a clear, well focussed and targeted reported. The Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report was approved.</p> <p>Approved: the Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report was approved.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Annual Review of Complaints/Compliments</p> <p>The VPCP highlighted the following data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 88 complaints received - Complaints exceeding 15 days reduced to 27% - Average resolution of complaints c12 days - Department for Education (DfE) escalations – two complaints following internal investigation alongside two complaints submitted directly – process being reviewed - Increased number of AI generative complaints - Seven open complaints - Notable increase of complaints around littering, anti-social behaviour - Complaints by area – highest number E&M at level 2, followed by IT and Trowel Trades - 21 compliments – 13 relating to curriculum and 8 for business support - Considering different timings for lunch time so all students were not out at the same time <p>CD noted the references to complaints being made regarding safeguarding issues and requested that these were addressed with the Director of Student Support and Welfare in the meeting with Link Governors. This was noted.</p> <p>CD advised that the College needed to ensure the reference to the DfE remained in the process but the internal process needed to be strengthened.</p>

	<p>In response to a comment from the Vice-Chair, the VPCP confirmed that treatment by staff was the key issue being raised.</p> <p>FA asked whether there had been any vindictive complaints. The VPCP replied that a large percentage of student complaints were from the same area therefore it was clear that there was a definite issue.</p> <p>DB questioned how the complaints regarding staff were being dealt with. The VPCP responded that there was an investigation undertaken by the Head of Department who then met with the students and replied to them with a resolution. Complaints regarding staff behaviour towards students was escalated to HR. It was agreed that future reports would include trends on outcomes of complaints.</p> <p>SNo referred to the complaints regarding withdrawals and asked if this was because the position was only being communicated verbally. The VPCP advised that students were removed at the beginning of the year and, although a framework was in place, parents were not always informed.</p> <p>SNo questioned whether there was any connection re attendance and bursaries. The VPCP stated that training for staff was taking place the following day on this topic as there were issues re ensuring the information was on the system quick enough.</p> <p>The Chair stated that it was pleasing to hear the good work taking place.</p> <p>Action: Trends on outcomes of complaints to be added to future reports.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Policy & Resources Committee Update</p> <p>The Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee, CD, updated the Board on the following areas of discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of items were covered in the agenda - EDI update on the work of the EDI Steering Group including issues around national politics - Attended recent EDI conference- - materials shared (follow up meeting to be arranged with CGO/DHR) - KPI dashboard – including under recruitment on next years funding - Staff cost ratio - Increase focus on marketing and recruitment requested - Proactive sickness absence management - Slight increase in staff turnover given VR process - Need to review probation periods and flexible working arrangements in light of new legislation - Health & Safety update – good report including trends reporting – uplift in visits to work placements - Strong performance in subcontracting for the two subcontractors with a predicted 90% QAR and strong feedback from external audit - Approved increased funding for Aspire – confirmed by the Board <p>Approved: the increase in subcontracting funding for Aspire was approved.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Management Accounts</p> <p>The IDPFR highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget - Potential clawback on apprenticeships likely to fall in 2026/27 - Increase in subcontracting to ensure hit adult 100% delivery - £200K additional capital expenditure - Settled insurance claim - DfE uplift and lagged funding

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cut of £120K re AEB/GLA - Employers' contributions for LGPS reduced by c£50K per month - Final draft for period 7 accounts – issued next week - Deep dive into forecasting to take place to inform draft budget <p>Approved: the current position was noted.</p>
12.	<p>Broadway Theatre Update The Principal/CEO advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The company remained active – previously carrying costs for member of staff who had now been made redundant - Final set of accounts at the end of the year - Communication from the Council re RAAC issue – want to work with the College to understand the costs incurred for the survey on the RAAC <p>Agreed: that the current update be received.</p>
13.	<p>Governance Update The CGO highlighted progress against the Governor SMART action plan highlighting the areas rated as red:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governor portal – unforeseen IT issues, particularly affecting Teams, had caused delays – work taking place to address - Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for Governors – meetings taking place to discuss - Student Governor – disappointing that the Board still had a vacancy for one Student Governor despite raising the profile and targeted communications. This was being followed up as a priority. <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
14.	<p>Audit & Risk Committee Update The Vice-Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, BP, noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on internal audit - Consider re priorities - cyber security - Risk Register - DfE Funding Assurance Audit <p>Agreed: the current position be noted.</p>
15.	<p>Risk Register The IDPFR informed the Board of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk discussed at each committee - Register under review and risk appetite to be considered <p>The Chair stated that the current format communicated the risks well and thanked the IDPFR for the update.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
16.	<p>AoB There was no further business.</p>
17.	<p>Self-assessment – to be issued after the meeting.</p>
18.	<p>Date and time of next meeting – Strategy Event 20 April. Monday 18 May 2026, 5pm</p>

The Chair thanked all in attendance for their contributions. The meeting closed at 19.02pm,

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)	