



**Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 17:00**

**GOVERNORS PRESENT:** Kate Truscott, Chair  
Ben Owen, Vice Chair  
Nick Butler (from 17:20)  
Charles Heaton  
Kudzai Muzangaza  
Joanna Poon  
Edward Rawson  
Kit Salt  
Paul Wheeler  
Andrew Cropley, Principal & Chief Executive Officer  
Kerry Pilcher, Academic Staff Governor  
Andrew Spencer, Business Support Staff Governor  
Avery Alsop, Student Governor (from 17:05)  
Claire Dube, Student Governor (from 17:05)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Jonathan Mills, Special Advisor: Employer Engagement (until 17:15)  
Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement & Student Experience  
Diane Booth, Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality  
Jon Fearon, Finance Director  
Sian Geeson, Director: Human Resources & Organisational Development  
Eloise Hopkinson, Head of Governance

**1**      **NEW APPOINTMENTS – STAFF AND STUDENT GOVERNORS**  
The head of governance made governors aware that Kerry Pilcher had been elected as academic staff governor.  
  
Governors were also asked to approve the appointment of Avery Alsop and Claire Dube as student governors for the academic year 2025/26, following their very successful interviews. Members of the interview panel had been very impressed by how the students presented themselves.  
  
AGREED:  

- to note the appointment of Kerry Pilcher as academic staff governor for an initial term of four years

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Truscott* \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

- to approve the appointment of Avery Alsop and Claire Dube as student governors for academic year 2025/26

(Avery Alsop and Claire Dube were invited to join the meeting at 17:10.)

**2**      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. No specific declarations were made and standing declarations were noted.

**3**      **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from David Gillies, Alison Griffiths, Theresa Hodgkinson, Rob Simcox, Keith Spiers, Jane Peacock and Gavin Peake.

The new staff and student governors were given the opportunity to briefly introduce themselves to the other members of the board.

**4**      **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025**

The minutes were reviewed, and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

There were no matters arising.

**5**      **ACTION PROGRESS REPORT**

The board were happy to note the content of the update provided.

-      **SCENE SETTING**

The chair briefly set the scene for the meeting, which was the first board meeting of the academic year.

She acknowledged that the new appointees will not have had time to read the papers and so may be limited in how far they can engage with this meeting. She explained that, during board meetings, all papers are taken as read with the narrative touched upon only briefly by presenters in order to allow more time for comments, questioning, discussion and challenge by governors. A lot of work is done at committee level to ensure that sufficient discussion and debate is carried out there, and full minutes of all committee meetings are presented along with the committee chairs' covering reports.

**6**      **SPECIAL ADVISOR UPDATE: EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

The special advisor to the board provided an update against his recommendations. He detailed a number of actions which had already been achieved, and he noted that the summer had been a productive one in terms of employer engagement.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience indicated that the special advisor has given really constructive challenge, and it was agreed that this came through within his report. The special advisor was thanked by the board for the work undertaken so far and for his excellent report.

One governor questioned why there was no mention of using the college's own media students to produce the promotional video. College leaders fed back that the video would have been an ideal project for the media students if they had capacity, but the fact is that the learning company is actually already booked up with other work. Therefore, it is likely that the college's internal marketing apprentices will do it. However, as the Marketing team is currently focusing heavily on the new website, any filming will probably not happen until after Christmas.

The special advisor recorded his thanks for the feedback provided, indicating that it was good to be able to add value and to play a part in driving improvement. He explained that some of the proposed timeframes for the actions might need to flex, but he feeds back to other employers through the appropriate channels and has received good feedback from others in relation to the college.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

(The special advisor left the meeting at 17:15.)

7

**BALANCED SCORECARD AND ANNUAL KPIS – 2024/25 YEAREND**

The principal presented this report to close down the 2024/25 academic year, also providing some background and context for those individuals who were new to the board. He highlighted the following points of note:

- The college was still not in an ideal position in terms of English and maths, but it was noted that the marking of exam papers was poor and the vice principal: curriculum and quality had written a letter of complaint to the awarding body, encouraging them to address this issue.
- It was recognised that attendance remained an issue and needed further improvement – all relevant staff within the college continued to work hard to change. In 2025/26, English and maths had been streamed by grade, and senior leaders were hopeful that this would have a positive impact. However, it was too early to tell at the point of the board meeting. Feedback from teachers indicated that the streaming had been positively received so far.
- In summary, English and maths remained a constant challenge – it was believed that good progress was being made, but leaders acknowledged that focus must be maintained. It was also pointed out that teaching in class is not reflective of the results.

Signed:           *Kate Trcott*           Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

- It was acknowledged that more items were RAG-rated green in the scorecard and there is good performance overall across the college. T Levels were good, apprenticeships had shown improvement, and the majority of curriculum areas were doing very well.

One governor questioned why the college had not streamed English and maths classes before. The vice principal explained that the college had tried to make them vocationally relevant and, to do this, it is better to have students from the same curriculum area in the same English and maths classes. This also keeps friendship groups together, which can keep students happier. There is also the issue of scale: streaming does complicate timetabling, particularly when as it can mean having some groups which are too small to be efficient. The college's other sites do not have sufficient student numbers to allow streaming, but Derby Road now does. Therefore, the college has sacrificed having that vocational subject focus to bring together learners of the same English or maths level. Governors were assured that leaders were monitoring this to ensure it remained effective. Some students were not pleased to be separated from their friends, but these issues were being worked through.

One governor raised a question in relation to staff costs, which were RAG-rated red – the finance director agreed that they were higher than planned last year, but so was the college's income. It was known that staff costs would be higher than expected to resource growth, but income was high enough to ensure that the college was close to hitting its EBITDA target.

The finance director reminded governors that the National Insurance increases will continue to be funded up to a point, but the college will need to absorb any future increases resulting from higher numbers of staff and this would need to be factored into future budgets.

The chair thanked the senior team for a strong year's performance – it was noted to have been challenging at times, but it was a challenge to which everyone rose.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

**8 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, BALANCED SCORECARD AND ANNUAL KPIS PROPOSED FOR 2025/26**

The principal went on to present the strategic objectives for 2025/26. These were agreed during the summer but were presented to the board again for final approval. Also included within the report were the annual KPIS and balanced scorecard for 2025/26.

The team spent a lot of time in late 2024/25 working through and reviewing the mission, vision and values. This work had been finalised

Signed:           *Kate Trcott*           Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

and the new statements were presented for governors' approval, along with the strategic objectives for 2025/26.

Governors were happy to approve the proposals presented.

The principal explained that the balanced scorecard for the current year still had a lot of empty spaces as the data was not yet mature enough to allow any judgements to be made in respect of the targets. The only flagged issue related to attendance in maths and English, but much of this was just about getting the registers settled.

Again, governors were happy with the content of the update.

AGREED:

- to note the annual KPIs and the balanced scorecard update
- to approve the strategic objectives as presented.

9

### **QUALITY AND STANDARDS**

The committee chair presented his in-depth report. He reminded governors that, as for all committees, not all reports were attached to the chair's report as a matter of course, only those which were for approval or of particular note. However, governors were able to access any other papers which they may wish to read via the link provided in the chair's report.

- Quality Improvement Action Plan (QIAP)

The committee chair highlighted the closed QIAP for 2024/25 and actions for 2025/26, assuring the board that committee members were happy with the proposed actions. A Levels and apprenticeships had been removed as standalone items, which was agreed to be a positive development. It was acknowledged that both were making fantastic progress and staff were to be congratulated.

He indicated that, as had already been discussed, the focus on attendance remained for 2025/26. It was noted that this was an ongoing challenge across the Further Education sector and was not a challenge facing WNC alone. Furthermore, English and maths outcomes had not quite been as expected and so will also be a focus for improvement during 2025/26.

The chair of the Corporation Board made a comment in relation to streaming, indicating that this had clearly been given a lot of thought. It was observed that streaming classes by grade makes introducing a vocational relevance more difficult. However, GCSE Maths and English exams do not have any vocation-specific content, so it was noted to be better to focus on the actual exam topics in more detail. As explained earlier in the meeting, streaming was being trialled during 2025/26 to see whether it would make a difference to performance and attendance.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

One student governor indicated that she was supportive of the streaming approach and felt that many students would find this beneficial.

- Self-Assessment Report (SAR) timeline

The committee chair indicated that good progress was being made in relation to the judgements. It was clarified that, for 2024/25 and previous years, the SAR still refers to the old Ofsted framework, as the new framework impacts 2025/26 and beyond. Governors were reminded that, on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025, the vice principal: curriculum and quality will be delivering a development session for governors which will specifically cover the new framework.

Governors were assured that the college was in a strong position and was maintaining this position.

It was noted that some governors had signed up to the SAR validation meetings but there were still some gaps in the schedule if anyone else wished to step forward. It was confirmed that these were always online, so governors would not need to travel to a college site. Governors were asked to notify the vice principal's PA – either directly or via the head of governance – if they were able to attend any of the meetings. Governors' input within these validation meetings was described as being very valuable, and it was further discussed that the meetings are likewise informative for governors and help them to get to know the teams. Governors were encouraged to join for part of the meetings even if they were unable to stay for the full duration of any particular one. The business support staff governor indicated that he was happy to be involved, and the vice principal agreed to send through appropriate options.

In addition to the QIAP and SAR updates, the committee chair also drew the board's attention to the following matters:

- The committee were pleased to see the improvements in A-Level results. Performance is measured through ALPS, and this jumped from grade 8 to 6 – it was noted that a jump of two grades is very unusual, and governors agreed that it was very positive to see this excellent progress.
- Student support referrals have continued to increase each year, which shows that staff are confident to make referrals. There has been an increase in EDI concerns in some areas, but there is constant assurance around safeguarding and the work the team is doing, as well as a continuation of having a strong safeguarding link governor in place.
- Positive feedback was received from the peer review, with the college's careers education judged by EMCCA to be in the 'thriving' tier. This was agreed to be due to the hard work of

Signed:           *Kate Trcott*           Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

staff, and governors were pleased to see the impact and recognition at regional level.

- The committee received an update in relation to employer engagement and relevant KPIs update, which members were happy to approve.

Governors noted the hard work being carried out in all areas. It was particularly observed that the gaps in pass rates for ethnic minority students have closed and they are now surpassing the college average.

Finally, the committee chair presented the Terms of Reference, which the Corporation Board was recommended to approve. Governors were happy with the document as presented.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the summary report and the dates of the SAR internal validation meetings
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to note the content of the QIAP report
- to note the content of the combined safeguarding/Prevent, EDI, and priority groups report and approve the EDI action plan and Community Engagement Strategy
- to note the employer engagement update
- to approve the committee Terms of Reference 2025/26, as presented.

## 10 KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION – 2025 UPDATE

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented the board's mandatory annual safeguarding update. This session was recorded for those governors who were unable to attend the meeting. The head of governance indicated that all external governors who were not in attendance would be asked to watch the recording and confirm via email once they had done so.

One governor asked whether the increase in mental health and wellbeing results from the fact that the college is facilitating an environment where it is easier to report, or whether the volume of mental health challenges have simply increased. The vice principal suggested that students feel more able to come forward and there is an open culture in the college, but it is also the case that an increasing number of young people are struggling with their mental health. This can range from low-level anxiety to extreme mental health challenges in which external agencies are involved.

The academic staff governor mentioned the Prevent project, which is a project funded by the Home Office in which the college will work with the local authority to create a Prevent video. If this project goes ahead, the video will be filmed and starred in by college students and will be shared across Nottinghamshire.

Signed: Kate Trcott Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

One governor observed that the update provided a good overview of all college activities, which provides assurance that the college is on top of ensuring issues are being managed. However, the content that can now be created through the use of generative AI, such as photorealistic images which can be created from actual images or videos of individuals. He asked whether any consideration is being given to these technologies and whether there is any foresight in relation to emerging technology and associated risks. Governors were informed that, over the summer, the college's AI innovator carried out some specialist training with the safeguarding and welfare teams on these issues. In addition, AI awareness has been embedded into the tutorial programme for students. It was noted that some social media videos now include a warning that the content was generated by AI, but usage of AI certainly becoming more prolific and needs to be a focus for the college.

Governors questioned whether Smoothwall would flag if a learner were creating these images in college. The vice principal provided assurance that Smoothwall works on images as well as words and phrases, so it will flag any inappropriate images that are being generated. However, this only applies to college devices, so it will not be the case if learners make this sort of content using their personal devices. It was also confirmed that Smoothwall picks up other languages. In response to a question from one governor, it was explained that the AI tutorial for students takes place annually but might be repeated to provide further development if any specific issues arise.

One governor questioned whether they should complete a test or quiz to evidence that they have completed their annual update. It was noted that staff are asked to complete a test with a minimum pass mark of 80%, and the vice principal agreed that she would devise a test to be shared with governors. As governors were not expecting this in 2025/26 and the test would take time to devise and put into an appropriate format for sharing, it was agreed that this would commence from 2026/27.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the update
- that governors present within the meeting would be marked as having completed their mandatory annual safeguarding and Prevent update and that the recording would be shared with other governors to confirm once they had watched it
- that, from 2026/27 onwards, governors will be issued with a test which will then be completed to evidence that they have attended/watched and understood the annual safeguarding and Prevent update.

## 11 AUDIT AND RISK

Signed: Kate Trcott Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

The committee chair presented his detailed report, particularly inviting governors to note the following:

- Governors were asked to note the content of the documents presented. The Whistleblowing Policy has been updated to include external stakeholders and, the board is comfortable with the document presented, will be shared with the trade unions to obtain their agreement. It will then come back through the committee and board for final approval.
- The Validera report was noted to be very reassuring, with substantial assurance across almost all audits. Points from the previous committee chair had been taken on board.
- Several Senior Postholder and Governance risks have been added to the risk register. These are all related to succession planning for the Executive team and governors, building on past concerns that this matter was not receiving the attention it required.
- The committee's annual report to the board still needs a lot of work, so it was presented only as a very early draft. The final version will be approved by the committee in November to be presented at December's board meeting.
- The counter-fraud and anti-bribery policy was due for renewal but needed a large amount of work, so it was agreed that this would be submitted to the committee and board in February to enable the finance director to give this matter the focus it needed.

It was noted that there had been a very strong audit performance in-year, and it was hoped that this could be carried forward and built upon further during 2025/26.

Governors were asked to contact the head of governance if they had any further comments in respect of the Whistleblowing Policy before this was shared with the unions. No comments were raised within the meeting.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the chair's report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to endorse the Whistleblowing Policy for presentation to the trade unions, as presented
- to note the 2025/26 risk register
- to note the internal auditor's annual report
- to note the early draft of the Audit Committee's annual report to the board.

(Kudzai Muzangaza left the meeting at 18:45.)

**12**      **CYBERSECURITY UPDATE AND DISCUSSION**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

The principal informed governors that the Audit Committee had asked for this item to be presented to the Corporation Board. However, it had had to be postponed due to unforeseen circumstances and would be carried forward to December's meeting.

A paper has been written, and this will be circulated to board members in advance of the next board meeting.

**13**      **FINANCE AND ESTATES**

The committee chair invited governors to submit any questions or comments in respect of his detailed written report.

The principal provided an update on the Nottingham Trent University lease variation. This has now reached a satisfactory resolution, and NTU has agreed with WNC's interpretation of the lease. This was agreed to be a very positive outcome.

In relation to the subcontractor recommendations for the board to approve, the finance director asked the board to note and approve the following:

- At a previous meeting, it was agreed not to award White Rose a contract for 2025/26. However, the provider did perform as required towards the end of 2024/25, so it was then proposed to award the company £100k.
- White Rose had been acquired by another organisation, which then brought all of its hair and beauty brands under one UKPRN. Therefore, the provider now wishes to legally contract with WNC as 'London Hair Apprenticeship Academy', which is now the national brand under which it will operate. This was noted to be a sensible decision. The finance director assured governors that due diligence will be carried out on the parent company and the subsidiary company. The provider does hold a 'good' Ofsted rating. The finance director indicated that the college did historically engage with the London Hair Apprenticeship Academy under a previous ownership and, at that point, there were some concerns. However, he assured the board that he was aware of no issues in relation to Learning Curve as an organisation or its current ownership. The college will still be dealing with the same facilities and staff, but the provider's name for this recommendation should be London Hair Apprenticeship Academy.

One governor asked for more background about Cidori, but the finance director explained that this was a potential subcontracting arrangement which was no longer going to proceed. Instead, this would be a partnership wherein WNC will deliver and Cidori will direct learners through Department for Work and Pensions programmes and into college's delivery. This will enable the college to expand the number of learners on these programmes, but there will be some pilot activity first.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Cidori wanted to recommend an online construction programme, but the college has opted not to move forward with this as senior leaders feel that workshop experience is imperative for this subject. Instead, the focus will be on a teaching assistant programme. The finance director indicated that Cidori had links not only to DWP but also other ways through which those who have undertaken the course can find suitable job vacancies.

The finance director indicated that the Management Accounts had been updated since the Finance and Estates Committee's meeting – the version presented to the committee contained slightly incorrect figures due to a contingency having not been removed. However, this had since been rectified, and the final version was in the board pack for all governors to note. The recommendation that staff should receive a £150 bonus, as approved by the committee, had been retained. The college was within £50k of hitting its targeted budget; therefore, there was confidence that it would be affordable for any staff member who commenced their employment at the college prior to April 2025 to receive this bonus in December 2025.

The Estates Strategy was also presented to the committee, and governors were struck by the expansion of the estate. Governors thanked the director: IT, estates and learning resources and his team for the excellent work carried out over the summer. It was agreed that the college has some fantastic facilities and buildings, and learners are being supported in some of the best accommodation the college has ever had. It was also noted that it was very positive to see the level of capital investment, which is something to be proud of for both the college and the community.

Governors were happy to approve the Data Protection policy as presented. The principal informed governors that a specialist also advises the college in relation to this, in addition to the work carried out by the director: IT, estates and learning resources.

Finally, governors were also happy to approve the Standing Orders as presented, in line with the committee's recommendation.

**AGREED:**

- to note the content of the chair's report
- to note the content of the detailed minutes of the meeting
- to note the draft Management Accounts for July 2025 and the key yearend messages
- to approve that staff who commenced their employment with the college prior to April 2025 would receive a £150 bonus in December 2025
- to approve the proposed subcontract allocations as follows:
  - London Hair Apprenticeship Academy – £100k
  - Nottingham Forest Community Trust – £25k

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025



proposal being taken forward and given time and energy to see whether it might work. He indicated that the college's main concern would be in relation to how this could be managed if, for a certain individual, the 'guarantee' is not effective. He explained that he was asking governors whether they were comfortable with the concept and whether they felt it would be a positive thing to introduce. If they were happy for the Executive team to take this proposal forward and develop a plan, time and focus would be dedicated to this at the next leadership conference to obtain input from cross-college leaders.

One governor raised the question of whether this would be a guarantee or not, suggesting that this could potentially be problematic and cautioning the principal to take care when describing something as a 'guarantee'. This concern was echoed by other governors – applying the term 'guarantee' would set expectations that would then need to be met, and it was suggested that an alternative title would be safer. One suggestion for an alternative word to use was 'pledge'.

Aside from nervousness about committing to this being a specific 'guarantee', governors agreed that it was a good idea in principle and could be explored. However, it was necessary to be mindful of risk, and the board agreed that this would need to be thoroughly assessed in order to enable governors to take a view on the matter. However, governors were also in agreement that the college should not shy away from this challenge – it was reiterated that they were just nervous of the word 'guarantee' and were very keen that the risk be assessed in great detail. The principal and Executive team were asked to explore this matter further and fully analyse the risk before coming back to the board with a complete proposal. For example, one risk of which board members were aware was that 30 local businesses which would usually take apprentices were not currently planning to do so. Nonetheless, governors stated that they liked the idea. Governors also agreed that 95% was a great target, and they were supportive of this.

The finance director indicated that is a really strong desire to structure education so that employment is the outcome, not just a qualification. The college is striving to improve links with employers and drive this forward for local people, and this proposal captures this ambition. Sense The focus on getting people into work will only become stronger, and the local employers with whom the principal has discussed this proposal so far have been keen.

The principal felt that using the term 'pledge' could still risk the same downside if something goes wrong but with less impact when things go well. He felt that it was worth trying to implement this, but he indicated that he was not setting a deadline for the project as it would not be launched until it was absolutely right. He agreed to give this further thought and bring back a specific proposal which would provide all of the required information and address governors' concerns.

Principal

Final  
deadline  
TBC –  
interim  
updates  
via

Signed:           *Kate Trcott*           Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

In general discussion, governors acknowledged that programmes for young people were still under the DfE, but adult skills had moved to the DWP and would be very much outcome focused moving forward. Adult skills and apprenticeships were agreed to be vital for the community – narratives are changing and there will be a lot of emphasis on what is being delivered. The college must ensure that there are positive outcomes for its community.

One governor observed that there was a good opportunity to link this proposal with the Employer Engagement Strategy work and other related activities.

The principal suggested that part of the work in relation to this proposal would be to go out to a number of employer partners and ask how they would help the college to implement this 'guarantee' or 'pledge'. He reiterated that a lot of businesses wish to support the college, and it has a positive reputation in the local community, so he feels that a lot of employers would be keen to help.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the update provided
- that the Executive team will move forward and gather further detail, which will then be brought back to the board when the team is in a position to request approval – interim updates will be provided via the principal's report.

## 16 GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The head of governance presented a brief report and an amended board code of conduct, as well as the new complaints against senior postholders policy. She explained that the Senior Postholder and Governance Committee had been happy to recommend that the board approve both of these, as presented.

The head of governance then went on to ask what governors would prefer to see in terms of timings for the academic year's strategy days. These usually take place in March and June of every year, and the preference is to keep them wholly in person. However, governors' ability to attend is often limited, and the head of governance and the chair would ideally like to receive feedback as to what could be done to ensure as many board members as possible would be able to attend.

In response, governors present agreed that attending for a full day is difficult as it is problematic for most governors to take a full day off work, and half-days would be better. It was suggested that a 14:00 or 15:00 start would be ideal. The principal questioned whether this this would mean having more strategy events, or just less discussion and consideration of strategy. He reminded governors that the scheduling tends to dedicate half the time to meeting with externals, which would

Signed:           *Kate Trcott*           Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

be a challenge to fit into half days. In general discussion, it was suggested that running the strategy events from the early afternoon into the evening would be a good idea. Governors were heavily in favour of this model, as opposed to full-day strategy days, and it was agreed that the head of governance would schedule the events for 2025/26 and issue invitations accordingly.

The head of governance indicated that attendance could also be a challenge for some board meetings, particularly October and July. She suggested that this might be avoided if the board meeting dates for 2026/27 were put forward at this first meeting of 2025/26. Subsequently, she proposed 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2026, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2027, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2027, and 8<sup>th</sup> July 2027. These were largely similar to this year's model, except that May's meeting was proposed to fall a week later than in 2026 so that the upload deadline fell securely in May rather than in late April. Governors noted these proposed dates.

Finally, the head of governance gave a verbal update in relation to the external governance review. She indicated that she had spoken to Stone King and the Association of Colleges and had been given quite a lot of detail about what they could offer. The principal had spoken to David Cragg who had asked for some detail in response. The head of governance was proposing to pull together a working group to make a decision as to which reviewer to go with and what the scope should look like, and she requested board approval to delegate authority for these decisions to this group. This group would include the chair of the board, the principal, the head of governance, and ideally two or three other board members. Governors were welcome to either volunteer verbally during the meeting or to take some time to think about it and then email the head of governance. She indicated that those who were unable to be present would also be contacted to enquire whether they would like to be involved. She asked that any interest in involvement be submitted by 09:00 on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November so that this could be taken forward after the college's half term break.

AGREED:

- to approve the complaints against senior postholders procedure as presented
- to approve the Code of Conduct 2025
- to note the proposed October 2026 board meeting date and the other 2026/27 suggestions
- to delegate authority to a small working group to agree who to appoint as an external governance reviewer and the scope of the external review.

**17      ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no other items of urgent business.

**18      DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Signed:           *Kate Trcott*           Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 17:00. This meeting would be preceded by the first student panel meeting of 2025/26 and followed by the board's Christmas meal in Refined.

It was agreed that confidential matters would be recorded separately.

Staff and student governors left the meeting at 19:20.

The meeting closed at 19:30.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Chair

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025