

Draft

Minutes of the Governors' Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 8 October 2025

Present: Gillian Bardin - Chair of Search Committee and Vice Chair of Board
David Brown - Chair of Board
Jim Sutcliffe - Chair of Audit Committee
Richard Thorley - Vice Chair of Finance Committee (remote)

In Attendance:

Simone Lomas – Governance Professional
Jo Weeks – Deputy Governance Professional
Kate Wallace - Interim Principal
Stuart Arnfield - Director of Finance and Resources

Contributed: Guy Thomas – Chair of Finance Committee

Apologies for absence

Steve Wilkinson - Vice Chair of Curriculum and Standards

Declaration of Interest

1 Gill Bardin and Jim Sutcliffe declared an interest in Appendix B Planning for the Future.

Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 14 May 2025

2 The minutes were accepted as a true record, proposed by David Brown and seconded by Jim Sutcliffe.

Matters arising from the minutes

3 Please refer to Actions Tracker.

Attendance

3 Simone Lomas presented a paper outlining those Governors who had fallen below 66% attendance, the reasons were considered. There were two Governors registering below 66%.

4 Governors discussed at length the balance between the attendance of Governors at the meetings and the support they provide to the College outside of the Governor role.

5 It was agreed that there were no concerns regarding Steve Wilkinson's and Lukman Patel's attendance at sub committees due to the extensive value and support they offer to the Board and the College as a whole.

6 Governors noted the position.

Planning for the Future

- 7 Simone Lomas presented the report advising that there is currently one external Business Governor vacancy, two support Staff Governor vacancies and the ex-officio role of the Principal, based on our Board membership of up to 20 members.
- 8 Governors referred to the terms of office discussion at the last Full Board; agreeing that governors should hold the office for two terms; this will impact a substantial number of governors over a short period of time leaving the College exposed in terms of governance, knowledge and continuity.
- 9 Guy requested, that a waterfall table is produced that will display, for each governor, the number of terms of office served to date, their skills set and which committee(s) governors are a member of, to reduce the risk of the Governing Board becoming vulnerable and to enable a succession plan to be agreed and implemented.

Action: Governance Professional

- 10 As a result of the Ofsted feedback in relation to the skill set of the Governing Board, it was agreed for SMT to actively look for a potential governor with an FE background.

Action: Governance Professional/SMT

- 11 Discussion took place on approaching associates of the College, recruitment agencies, or the Clerk's Network. Gill Bardin provided information in relation to an agency called Governors for Schools; a free recruitment platform to source governors for schools, colleges and academies.

Staff and Student Governors

- 12 The College has received four applications, three from teaching staff and one from support staff. Benji Crampton, ex-student governor, is working on generating interest across College for student governor applications.
- 13 Gill raised a query regarding the number of student vacancies and whether this should be increased to three, and include an apprentice, to grow with the College.

Action: SMT/Governance Professional

- 14 Governors noted the governor update

Publication of Minutes

- 15 Simone Lomas introduced the paper bringing governors attention to an FE Weekly article that Gill Bardin had made her aware of relating to the publication of Governor minutes. Simone explained that the review of Governance in 2014 saw the introduction of a revised version of the Instruments and Articles of Governance, these aligned to guidance from the Department for Education, giving FE Colleges the autonomy to practice their own ways of working.

- 16 The College's current Instruments and Articles states that minutes are approved to be published 12 months after the date of the meeting after a redacted version is considered at the full board. The FE Commissioner has recently called on colleges to publish Board minutes within four to six months after.
- 17 Governors unanimously agreed to publish the approved Full Board and Search and Governance minutes within six months of the meeting on the College website.

Action: Governance Professional

Approved by Chair: Gillian Bardin

Signed: Gill Bardin

Date: 6 November 2025

NOTE: Final approval of the minutes will be at the following sub committee meeting.