Draft – Confidential

Meeting of the Governing Board held on Wednesday 3 December 2025

Present:	David Brown – Chair of the Board Gillian Bardin – Vice Chair of the Board Jim Sutcliffe – Chair of Audit Paul Henderson – Independent Governor David Tomlinson – Vice Chair of Audit Guy Thomas – Chair of Finance Steve Wilkinson – Vice Chair of Curriculum and Standards Sharon Roscoe – Independent Governor Lukman Patel – Independent Governor Paul Ragnall – Independent Governor Isabelle Balfour – Student Governor Hassan Khalil – Student Governor
Contributed:	Richard Thorley – Vice Chair of Finance Vikki Goddard – Independent Governor
In Attendance:	Kate Wallace – Interim Principal Stuart Arnfield – Director of Finance and Resources Simone Lomas – Governance Professional Nina Parkin – Assistant Principal – Adult and University Studies Neil Burrows – Director of Skills, Innovation and Employer Engagement Sarah Crossley – Assistant Principal – Sixth Form Studies Charlotte Ashworth – Deputy Head of Safeguarding Shannon Gill – Head of Quality Carly Collier – Senior Business Intelligence Analyst
Observers:	Jason Faulkner (appointed Principal) Ed Foulds (prospective Staff Governor) Craig Waddington (prospective Staff Governor) Alana Jones (prospective Student Governor) Robert Saxon (prospective Student Governor)

Apologies for Absence

Philip Turner – Chair of HR
Fiona Lugiano – Chair of Curriculum and Standards

Declaration of Interest

1 The Senior Management Team, including the Interim Principal, declared an interest regarding discussions related to the pay award, as their pay award is subject to the College pay award being made to all staff.

Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 October 2025

2 The Board approved the minutes as an accurate record proposed by Gillian Bardin and seconded by Jim Sutcliffe. A correction was noted: Paragraph 38 – “inspections,” not “accident.”

Action: Governance Professional

Matters Arising

3 No further matters were raised beyond those included in the Action Tracker.

Introductions to Staff and Student Governors

4 Staff Governors: The Board welcomed Ed Foulds and Craig Waddington, prospective Staff Governors, who remained to observe the meeting. Their appointment will be considered under Appendix G.

5 Student Governors: The Board met Alana Jones and Robert Saxon, prospective Student Governors from the Sixth Form cohort. Their appointment will be considered under Appendix G.

External Audit Requirement

6 Karen Musgrave (RSM) joined the meeting remotely to present the external audit findings. She confirmed that the financial statements present a true and fair view of the College’s financial position, that funding and income have been used appropriately, that the audit was professionally conducted with strong support from the Finance Manager and the Director of Finance and Resources, and that no significant issues were identified

7 Jim Sutcliffe asked RSM whether she would be adjusting her practice as a result of the findings from the initial data audit conducted by Beevers and Struthers. RSM responded that the situation was highly unusual, that no loss of funding had occurred, and that the audit team would remain vigilant going forward.

8 There were no further questions from Governors.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Updates

9 The Deputy Head of Safeguarding, re-presented the updated Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, reflecting further revisions following the Termly Safeguarding Meeting on 8 October 2025. The Board unanimously approved the updated policy, proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by Guy Thomas.

10 In response to a query regarding training compliance, The Deputy Head of Safeguarding confirmed that staff attendance at the sessions continues to be monitored through oversight of the registers.

Presentation: Impact of Implementing Governor Two-Term Limit

11 The Head of Systems and Business Intelligence and Senior Business Intelligence Analyst provided an analytical overview of the implications of enforcing the two-term limit for Governors, including impacts on continuity, succession planning, and committee structures.

Committee Updates

Safeguarding Committee Minutes – 8 October 2025

12 The Board received and noted the Safeguarding Committee minutes from 8 October 2025.

Academic Board – 8 October 2025

13 The draft minutes of the Academic Board were received and noted.

Search and Governance Committee – 8 October 2025

14 The draft minutes were presented for information and noted.

Human Resources Committee – 8 October 2025

15 The Board received the draft minutes. Governors noted that the staff survey results were significantly different from previous years and discussed the implications for staff morale.

16 **Extra-Ordinary Board Meetings – 15 October and 5 November 2025**
The draft minutes of both Extra-Ordinary Board meetings were received and noted.

Curriculum and Standards Committee – 5 November 2025

17 The Board received the draft minutes, noting that the reports were detailed, transparent, and reflective of current performance.

Audit Committee – 12 November 2025

18 The Board noted the Committee's draft minutes, including confirmation that Beevers and Struthers had given the College a clean opinion in relation to the recent ILR Audit. The Committee had discussed the process to tender for internal auditors.

Student Executive Board – 13 November 2025

19 The update was received and noted.

Finance Committee – 19 November 2025

20 Updates included a change to the current ratio from 1.8 to 1.4 to reflect the College's financial position more accurately; confirmation of 40 days cash in hand; a note of the underlying reasons for adjustments; and a request to revise the Public Value Statement.

Action: Director of Finance

Quality Committee

21 Governors noted that the minutes provided a summary of the meeting and requested for the minutes to include outcomes and actions for discussion. The Quality Manager agreed to include them going forward.

Action: Quality Manager

The College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2024/25

22 The Interim Principal introduced the SAR, using the new Ofsted framework and a "secure fit" approach. The SAR was rebuilt from the ground up to provide a robust, evidence-based reflection of curriculum performance and strengths in skills development.

23 Governors commended the honesty reported in the SAR compared to previous years and suggested refining the presentation. Governors requested an executive summary to support year-on-year tracking.

Action: Interim Principal

The College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2025/26

24 The Head of Quality presented the updated QIP incorporating previous feedback; numerical targets, milestones, and explicit responsible leads for accountability. Governors requested that Line 1 reference the Governing Board and succession planning.

Action: Interim Principal

Risk Management Progress Report 2025/26

25 The Interim Principal presented the update, confirming regular SMT review and a minor policy change. Governors discussed the impact/likelihood balance for Risk 1 and requested clarity. SMT will refine scoring and make Risk 5 references more specific with dates and years.

Action: SMT

26 A correction was raised to include the Search and Governance Committee in Paragraph 10. The Board noted the reference to Ellen Thinnesen, the new FE Commissioner, under the Internal Audit Service.

Action: Director of Finance

Audit Committee Annual Report to the Governing Board 2024/25

27 David Tomlinson presented the Annual Report, confirming compliance with the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice, an anticipated unqualified opinion on the accounts, and no changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference. The Board unanimously accepted and approved the Annual Report.

28 The Chair thanked Jim Sutcliffe for his service, noting this was his final formal Board meeting.

Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024/25

29 The Interim Principal presented the report; the College's financial health is currently assessed as "good" (subject to DfE validation). The College achieved a strong operating surplus and good cash generation. The Board unanimously approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements. The Chair commended the Senior Management Team for delivering a surplus in challenging circumstances.

Corporate Performance 2024/25 & 2025/26

30 The Interim Principal provided an overview of the strategic management cycle, annual results, and progress towards strategic goals, including headline achievements across the last three years. While some achievement rate tables appeared significantly red, actions within the QIP are addressing these issues. The curriculum has been refocused to ensure fitness for purpose, with removal of the 42-day qualification for appropriate learning aims.

31 Attendance remains below expectations; best practice is being shared and this remains a key focus. The Interim Principal confirmed confidence that achievement rates will be at or above national averages. Governors discussed the reliability of predictions and the pace of improvement. Student Governors queried how deep-dives are assessed; leaders described a shift away from graded observations toward multi-metric evaluation aligned to Ofsted expectations.

32 The report was noted.

Update on Governance Issues – Autumn/Winter Term 2025/2026

33 The Governance Professional presented an update including draft redacted minutes for publication, which were unanimously approved.

34 Governors noted that the College Seal had not been used and that one external Business Governor vacancy remains. The Board unanimously approved the appointments of Craig Waddington and Ed Foulds as Staff Governors for two years, and Robert Saxon (T Level) and Alana Jones (A Level) as Student Governors for one year.

25 A presentation was delivered at this meeting on the implications of enforcing the two-term limit; the Board noted potential impacts on continuity and succession planning.

Health and Safety Update – 2025/26

26 The Board received an update confirming incidents and accidents to date, with none reportable under RIDDOR. Thirty-six Health and Safety inspections have been completed, with 102 actions raised. A recent lockdown drill generated useful learning points.

27 The report was noted.

Governors' Strategic Planning Overview

28 The Interim Principal introduced the paper and invited comments on highlighted sections. Governors discussed the decline in applications influenced by later decision-making in schools; strengthened school liaison and marketing strategies; parental influence on decisions; local demographic patterns; and subject-level demand variation. Governors also discussed opportunities for positive media engagement and sharing success stories.

29 The paper was noted.

Pay Award 2025/26

30 The Governors' Human Resources Committee considered the possibility of a pay award in 2025/26 at their meeting in October 2025 and recommended that a pay award is made, subject to the Finance Committee agreeing on affordability and scale, and subject to full Governing Board approval.

31 The Finance Committee reviewed the affordability of a pay award at its meeting in November 2025. The proposal for a consolidated pay award of 4% for all staff, to be implemented in the December payroll and backdated to 1 August 2025 was unanimously approved by the Full Board, proposed by Sharon Roscoe and seconded by Guy Thomas.

Remuneration Committee Minute

32 A verbal update was provided to confirm approval of the extra-ordinary Remuneration Committee minutes, which had considered the Deputy Principal's pay award that was not reviewed at the August 2025 meeting due to the temporary appointment of the Interim Principal. The recommendation was unanimously approved proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by Sharon Roscoe.

Approved by Chair, David Brown Signed: Date:
NOTE: Final approval of the minutes will be at the following Board meeting.